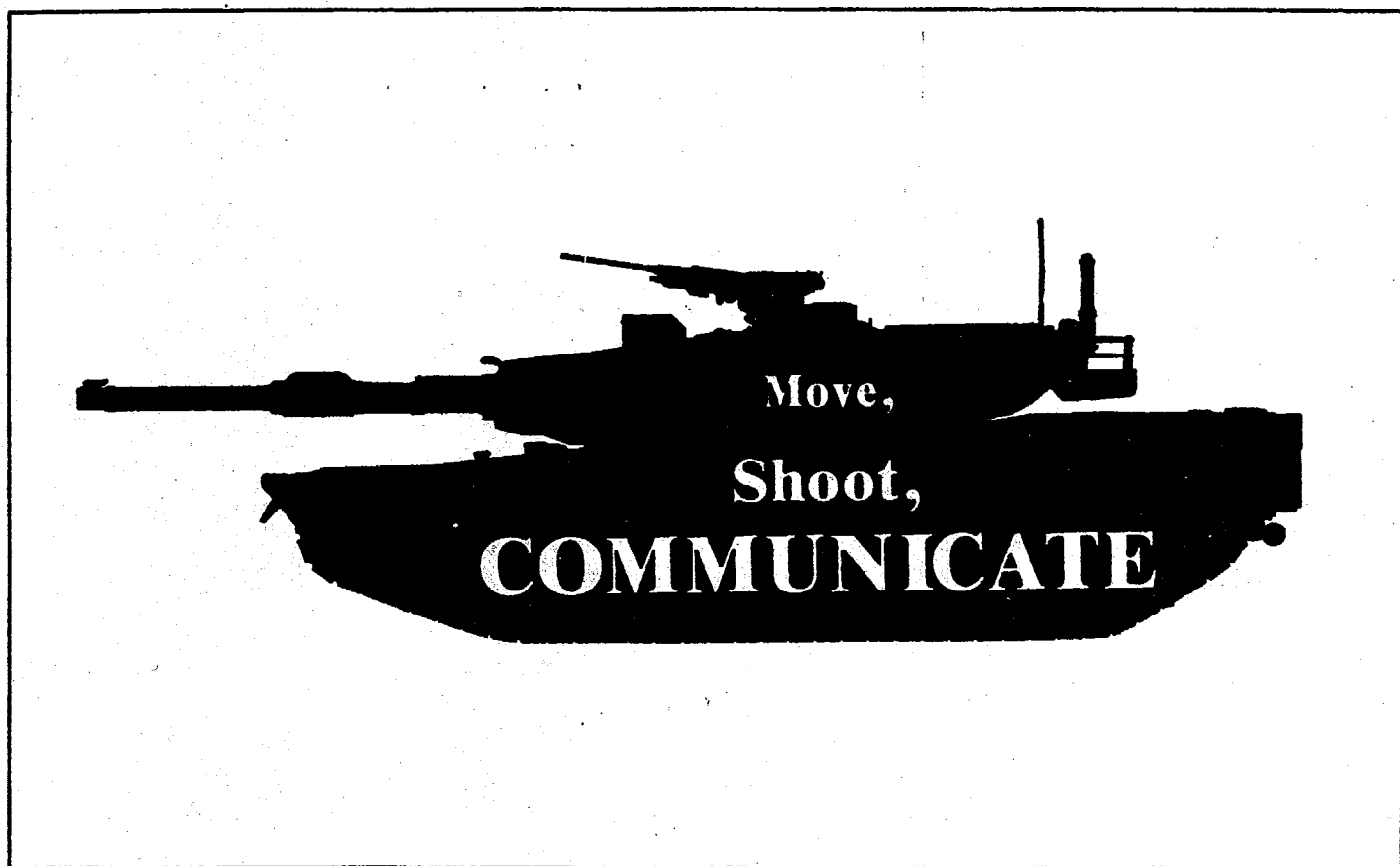


**FORT KNOX  
SUPPLEMENTAL  
MATERIAL**

**FKSM 25-50-1**

# **THE ARMY WRITING PROGRAM**

**ARMOR OFFICER BASIC**



**U.S. ARMY ARMOR CENTER  
FORT KNOX, KENTUCKY 40121-5000**

**MAY 1991**

# THE ARMY WRITING PROGRAM

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FOREWORD

12/23/85

"...an order that can be misunderstood will be misunderstood."

- Von Moltke -

Communicating accurate, timely instructions and information is as vital to today's Army as it was to armies of the 1800's. Consider this order from the Crimean War:

"Lord Raglan wishes the Cavalry to advance rapidly to the front -- follow the enemy and try to prevent the enemy carrying away the guns. Troop Horse Artillery may accompany. French Cavalry is on your left. Immediate." Lord Raglan yelled to the aide as he left, "Tell Lord Lucan that the Cavalry is to attack immediately."

Where was the cavalry to attack? While the fateful Charge of the Light Brigade is history, should we be guilty of such imprecise, obtuse communications today the result would be much the same. The major difference being that shortened time and distance factors will make our losses much more destructive to the Total Army.

We must be able to articulate our intentions so that soldiers and civilians two echelons removed will know the end we seek. One way to assure such clear and concise communication is by improving the quality of our writing. This pamphlet, Effective Writing for Army Leaders, can help if used correctly. It introduces a new, simplified writing style which establishes writing standards and guidelines, and outlines editing tools to help reinforce the standards for ourselves and our subordinates.

We must improve our communicating skills. An order that can be understood will be understood. When and if our soldiers are called upon to risk their lives in the accomplishment of their mission, there must be no mistaking exactly what we require of them.

*All of us, from Chief on down, need to improve our skills. Learning to write well is a life long endeavor.*

JOHN A. WICKHAM, JR.

General, United States Army  
Chief of Staff



**NOTES**

**NOTES**

## Section IV Effective Writing and Correspondence—The New Army Writing Style

### 1-47. Goal

a. The goal of all Army correspondence is effective communication. Information overload and the complexity of the modern Army mandate changes in writing correspondence.

b. To make these changes, the Army has set new standards for all Army writings, including correspondence. These new standards are the mandated Army style, and are not suggestions.

### 1-48. Standards for Army writing

a. Effective Army writing transmits a clear message in a single, rapid reading, and is generally free of errors in grammar, mechanics, and usage.

b. Good Army writing is concise, organized, and right to the point.

### 1-49. Changing the style for effective correspondence

a. Two major changes. Meeting the new standards for correspondence requires two essential changes: putting the main point at the beginning and using the active voice.

b. Begin with the main point. Put the "bottom line" up front. Begin with the purpose for writing. The strongest correspondence highlights the important information at the beginning.

#### (1) EXAMPLE 1: Main point hidden.

(a) This responds to your request for a determination of your eligibility to receive parachute duty pay during the period 26 Aug 88 to 15 Jan 89.

(b) AR—specifically states that "students undergoing training above the entry level while undergoing such training are entitled to pay as may be appropriate."

(c) Specifically, since the course in question is above entry level, you are entitled to parachute duty pay during the period you were undergoing training.

(d) A copy of this letter and your orders assigning you to the training courses should be submitted to your Personnel Servicing Center (PSC) for preparation of appropriate forms.

The correspondence above has many problems—it is wordy, impersonal, and passive—but the major obstacle to effectiveness is that it delays the most important information. Moving the main idea to the first sentence improves communication. Getting rid of unnecessary words and jargon helps, of course, but the "bottom line" up front makes the most difference.

#### (2) EXAMPLE 2: Main point up front.

(a) You are entitled to jump pay for the time you spent in training last year.

(b) To be paid, you will need to fill out the necessary forms at your Personnel Servicing Center (PSC). Take the PSC copies

of this letter and the orders assigning you to the course.

#### c. Use active writing.

(1) The active voice emphasizes the doer of the action. Action writing:

(a) Shows who or what does the action in the sentence, or

(b) Puts the doer before the verb.

(2) The standard English sentence order, subject-verb-object, works best. It speeds communication and helps the reader understand the main point.

(3) The active voice creates shorter sentences. Eliminating the passive voice reduces the number of words in a sentence.

(a) Passive: The PT test was passed by SGT Hayes (8 words).

(b) Active: SGT Hayes passed the PT test (6 words).

(4) The passive voice is easy to recognize. A verb in the passive voice uses any form of to be plus the past participle of a main verb (such as am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been), plus a main verb usually ending in en or ed. For example: were completed, is requested.

### 1-50. Constructing the new style

a. General techniques. Focusing first on the main point changes the basic construction of correspondence and using the active voice changes the basic style of Army writing. These two general steps are the beginning of a new style of writing.

b. Specific techniques. Meeting the new standards for correspondence requires more specific techniques, however. Use these additional rules of correspondence construction to improve effectiveness.

(1) Use short words. Try not to use more than 15 percent over two syllables long.

(2) Keep sentences short. The average length of a sentence should be about 15 words.

(3) Write paragraphs which, with few exceptions, are no more than one inch deep.

(4) Avoid jargon.

(5) Use correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

(6) Use I, you, and we as subjects of sentences instead of: this office, this headquarters, all individuals, and so forth.

(7) Write one page letters and memorandums for most correspondence.

(8) Avoid sentences that begin with "It is ... There is ... or, There are ..."

### 1-51. Changing the pattern

a. Structure. Besides changing the basic style of correspondence, the new writing standards mean changing the overall structure of correspondence. This larger patterning, or packaging, is not a format. The simplified formats in this regulation are specific ways of structuring particular kinds of correspondence. Packaging, however, applies to all Army writing.

b. Framework. Packaging is the general framework of the new writing style. All formats start with this standard structure and

then tailor it to each type correspondence.

c. Packaging. Structure correspondence for easy quick reading:

(1) First, open with a short, clear purpose sentence.

(2) Next, put the recommendation, conclusion, or more important information as the main point. (These first two steps can be combined in some correspondence.)

(3) Last, clearly separate each section. Use short paragraph headings or section titles.

#### (a) EXAMPLE 1: Without packaging.

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to publish policies and procedures to lessen the administrative burden on the operating forces through a reduction in the need for directives pyramiding.

2. Directives issued by headquarters activities are often worded or phrased in such a manner that other commands are required to issue amplifying directives. This pyramiding effect creates an unnecessary administrative burden on the operating forces.

3. It is the policy of the commander that directives issued by headquarters activities be written in clear language and in sufficient detail and clarity to obviate the necessity for other commands to issue amplifying directives. In the event that amplifying information or implementing directives are required to be issued by other echelons, the headquarters instruction should not be distributed to activities below the level of the reissuing command. When time and circumstances permit, proposed directives within the above context may be coordinated with higher headquarters prior to publishing.

4. Addressees shall ensure that proposed headquarters directives comply with the foregoing policies.

#### (a) EXAMPLE 2: Using packaging.

1. Purpose. To reduce the need to supplement directives.

2. Recommendation. That the Army follow these policies when preparing directives.

3. Clarity. All directives must be so clear and detailed that lower commands do not have to write unnecessary supplements.

4. Supplementation. If a lower echelon must create a supplement, do not distribute the directive below the supplementing command.

5. Coordination. When time and other circumstances permit, coordinate a proposed directive with higher headquarters.

### 1-52. Achieving the standards

a. Use the construction rules and the packaging rules outlined in this section to change the overall effectiveness of Army correspondence.

b. Use the new Army writing style established in this regulation and DA PAM 600-67 as the standard for writing correspondence.

**SCORING KEY**  
**ARMY WRITING PROGRAM**

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_ Student No. \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_

**Evaluation**

- \_\_\_\_\_ I would sign this document. (Superior)  
\_\_\_\_\_ I would sign this document after revision. (Satisfactory)  
\_\_\_\_\_ I would require a complete rewrite of this document. (Unsatisfactory)

**Substance**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Inadequate.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Bottom line poorly supported.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Bottom line not clear.

**Organization**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Bottom line not up front.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Poorly ordered presentation.

**Style**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Verbose.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Too much jargon.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Too many long words.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Too many weak verbs.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Use of passive voice.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Sentences too long.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Paragraphs too long.

**Correctness**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Errors in spelling.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Errors in sentence construction.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Errors in subject-verb agreement.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Errors in punctuation.

**-Key to Correction Symbols-**

<b>S</b>	misspelled word
<b>Frag</b>	sentence fragment
<b>CS</b>	comma splice
<b>Ref</b>	unclear pronoun reference
<b>delete</b>	delete
<b>RS</b>	run on sentence
<b>llism</b>	parallelism faulty

<b>P</b>	improper punctuation
<b>Ag</b>	faulty subject-verb agreement
<b>Pas</b>	inappropriate use of passive voice
<b>W</b>	wordy
<b>^</b>	omission
<b>¶</b>	new paragraph

**I will not confuse criticism of my writing with criticism of me.**  
**-William A. McIntosh**

# THE STANDARD DEFINED

	<u>SUPERIOR</u>	<u>SATISFACTORY</u>	<u>UNSATISFACTORY</u>
<b>SUBSTANCE</b>	Main idea clearly defined and developed with originality and thought, and supported substantially and concretely.	Main idea adequately defined but occasionally repetitious, sketchy, irrelevant or inconsistent.	Main idea unclear or inadequately developed and supported.
<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	Main idea up front; assignment clearly ordered into necessary stages; paragraphs developed with unusual effectiveness; transitions clear and effective; sentences and paragraphs coherent.	Main idea up front; plan apparent but transitions between paragraphs abrupt or mechanical; some sentences ineffective though structurally correct.	Main idea not up front; no apparent order; transitions between paragraphs inadequate if present.
<b>STYLE</b>	Writing appropriate, clear, concise, active; words, sentences, and paragraphs short.	Writing appropriate; some passive constructions; short words, sentences, paragraphs; some vague expressions.	Generally long words, sentences, paragraphs; many passive constructions.
<b>CORRECTNESS</b>	Few, if any, misspellings; punctuation and grammar correct.	Occasional minor errors in grammar and punctuation; occasional misspellings.	Frequent, serious errors in grammar and punctuation; frequent misspellings.

# SECTION I

## ARMY WRITING

# ARMY WRITING

## 1. Guiding Principles for Army Writing.

a. Write only when it makes sense. If you can accomplish your purpose face to face or with a phone call, do so. Don't write unless you have to.

b. Have a clear purpose for your writing. All papers should either inform or persuade.

c. Write with your reader in mind. Be brief and to the point. Don't waste his time. Tell him what he needs to know and why he needs to know it.

d. Write to express your ideas, not to impress someone. Come across as a sensible person who knows that plain English is best.

e. Coordinate your papers with all staffs and units affected. Resolve disagreements at the lowest level. Allow a reasonable time for suspenses, usually seven to ten working days.

## 2. The Army Writing Style. To achieve the Army standard as outlined in DA Pam 600-67, follow the seven key points of the Army Writing Style:

### a. Use mostly short, conversational words.

Keep long words (three or more syllables) to 15 percent of your total. Be simple, direct, and personal. Use personal pronouns (I, you, he, she, we, they). Try some contractions (I'm, you're, can't, don't). Don't use confusing jargon, technical terms, or legalese. Don't build long strings of nouns—"Nut-2-3-4 Phrases." Prefer concrete nouns and active verbs.

### b. Write short sentences.

Average 15 words per sentence. Stay mostly between 12 and 20 words. Avoid starting sentences with "It is," "There is," and "There are." Avoid "that" and "which." Don't smother your verbs. (e.g., say "decide," not "make a decision.") Shorten wordy expressions. Avoid repetition.

### c. Write short paragraphs.

Keep them, with few exceptions, to 1 inch deep (roughly 75 words). Put the main idea of the paragraph in the first sentence. Use headers, subparagraphs, and lists when possible.

### d. Write short papers in the right format.

Try to keep staff action papers one or two pages long. Use enclosures freely for longer discussions. Give your reader data he needs to know. Limit the "nice-to-know." Follow the right format from AR 25-50, FM 101-5, or other references.

e. Put your "bottom line" up front, and package the rest of your information for a single rapid reading.

First, open with a short, clear statement of your purpose. Next, state your main point (your request, recommendation, answer, conclusion, tasking or summary) in the first or second paragraph. Then, arrange your information under clear headings in short paragraphs that follow a logical pattern. Last, divide long paragraphs into subparagraphs or lists.

f. Prefer active verbs, not passive ones.

Rely on active verbs in the present tense. Put doers before verbs. Avoid passive verbs—the forms of "to be" (am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been) linked with a main verb (usually ending in -ed).

g. Be correct and credible.

Use standard punctuation, spelling, and grammar. Be factual, objective, and logical. Be neat and legible.

3. **Three Writing Tools.** To further improve your writing, use these three writing tools:

a. Mindmapping: a form of brainstorming and outlining. (See pg. 120)

b. Clarity Index: a measure of readability. (See pg. 41)

c. Quick Screen Edit: a quick search for errors. (See pg. 34)

4. **The Six-Step Writing Process.**

a. Know your task. Focus on your subject, audience, and purpose.

b. Organize your thoughts. Mindmap, outline, and package your ideas. Then identify your main point—your "bottom line."

c. Write your rough draft using plain English.

d. Revise your paper. Do a Quick Screen Edit to find violations of the Army Writing Style. Compute a Clarity Index, and then revise if necessary.

e. Fight for feedback. Have others review your paper. Then revise it again.

f. Go final, and then proofread it.

## 5. Advice for Supervisors of Writers.

### a. Help your writers. Discuss every writing project and clarify the:

- (1) Subject.
- (2) Purpose.
- (3) Intended audience.
- (4) Signer.
- (5) Key points you want to make.
- (6) Length.
- (7) Suspense date.
- (8) Format.

### b. Encourage your writers to use the new style.

- (1) Tell your writers you want plain English.
- (2) Don't force your style and "pet" expressions on them.
- (3) Set a good example in your writing.

### c. Review the correspondence carefully. Ask yourself:

- (1) Does it serve the purpose?
- (2) Is the tone proper?
- (3) Is the main point clear?
- (4) Is it credible, well-supported, and organized?
- (5) Is it concise?
- (6) Is it generally free of errors in grammar, mechanics, and usage?

### d. Don't nit-pick your writers. Suggest changes, and let the writers make them. Give reasons for major changes.

## 6. Formats for Army Writing.

a. Preparing and Managing Correspondence, AR 25-50, gives guidance on the basic Army formats: the letter, the memorandum, the informal memorandum, and the memorandum for record.

b. Staff Organization and Operations, FM 101-5, gives guidance on writing combat orders, plans, estimates, annexes, staff studies, and messages.

c. Action Officers Guide, DA Pam 310-20, gives guidance on writing Army administrative publications.

d. This handbook gives examples of the Army Writing Style applied to many common Army forms and formats.



# THE WORDS OF ARMY WRITING

Here are some words you see often in military writing. You probably use them yourself in letters and staff actions. Select the term that best represents your definition for each of these words:

1. Interface

- a. interaction
- b. connection
- c. common boundary
- d. close coordination
- e. integration

6. Viable

- a. competitive
- b. practical
- c. economical
- d. useful
- e. capable of living independently

2. Infer

- a. make a suggestion
- b. assume
- c. imply
- d. decide
- e. deduce

7. Facilitate

- a. make possible
- b. give help
- c. lend support
- d. make easier
- e. accomplish

3. Definitive

- a. certain
- b. precise
- c. conclusive
- d. final
- e. unchangeable

8. Proactive

- a. in favor of
- b. maximum
- c. interference
- d. to promote actively
- e. none of the above

4. Feasible

- a. probable
- b. possible, but not likely
- c. plausible
- d. practical
- e. capable of being done

9. Collect

- a. display
- b. select
- c. gather
- d. exhibit
- e. none of the above

5. Impact

- a. affect
- b. involve
- c. fix firmly
- d. influence
- e. none of the above

10. Omit

- a. leave out
- b. ignore
- c. forget
- d. purge
- e. none of the above

\*\*\*\*\*

"Short words are best, and the old words, when short are best of all."

-Sir Winston Churchill

\*\*\*\*\*

# SIMPLER WORDS AND PHRASES

Official writing does not demand big words or fat phrases. Go out of your way to use ordinary English. The result will be clearer thinking and shorter writing. Asterisks mark the dirty dozen, the twelve offenders most likely to weaken your work.

<u>Instead of</u>	<u>Try</u>
a and/or b . . . . .	a or b or both
accompany. . . . .	go with
accomplish . . . . .	carry out, do
accorded . . . . .	given
accordingly. . . . .	so
accrue . . . . .	add, gain
accurate . . . . .	correct, exact, right
additional . . . . .	added, more, other
address. . . . .	discuss
*addressees . . . . .	you
addressees are requested . . . . .	(omit), please
adjacent to. . . . .	next to
advantageous . . . . .	helpful
adversely impact on. . . . .	hurt, set back
advise . . . . .	recommend, tell
afford an opportunity. . . . .	allow, let
aircraft . . . . .	plane
allocate . . . . .	divide, give
anticipate . . . . .	expect
a number of. . . . .	some
apparent . . . . .	clear, plain
appreciable. . . . .	many
appropriate. . . . .	(omit), proper, right
approximately. . . . .	about
arrive onboard . . . . .	arrive
as a means of. . . . .	to
ascertain. . . . .	find out, learn
as prescribed by . . . . .	in, under
*assist, assistance. . . . .	aid, help
attain . . . . .	meet
attempt. . . . .	try
at the present time. . . . .	at present, now
be advised . . . . .	(omit)
benefit. . . . .	help
by means of. . . . .	by, with
capability . . . . .	ability, can
caveat . . . . .	warning
close proximity. . . . .	near
combat environment . . . . .	combat
combined . . . . .	joint
*commence. . . . .	begin, start
comply with. . . . .	follow
component. . . . .	part

Instead ofTry

comprise . . . . .	form, include, make up
concerning . . . . .	about, on
consequently . . . . .	so
consolidate. . . . .	combine, join, merge
constitutes. . . . .	is, forms, makes up
contains . . . . .	has
convene. . . . .	meet
currently. . . . .	(omit), now
deem . . . . .	believe, consider, think
delete . . . . .	cut, drop
demonstrate. . . . .	prove, show
depart . . . . .	leave
designate. . . . .	appoint, choose, name
desire . . . . .	want, wish
determine. . . . .	decide, figure, find
disclose . . . . .	show
discontinue. . . . .	drop, stop
disseminate. . . . .	give, issue, pass, send
due to the fact that . . . . .	due to, since
during the period. . . . .	during
effect modifications . . . . .	make changes
elect. . . . .	choose, pick
eliminate. . . . .	cut, drop, end
employ . . . . .	meet
endeavor . . . . .	try
ensure . . . . .	make sure
enumerate. . . . .	count
equipments . . . . .	equipment
equitable. . . . .	fair
equivalent . . . . .	equal
establish. . . . .	set up, prove, show
evidenced. . . . .	showed shown
evident. . . . .	clear
exhibit. . . . .	show
expedite . . . . .	hasten, speed up
expeditious. . . . .	fast, quick
expend . . . . .	spend
expertise. . . . .	ability, skill
expiration . . . . .	end
facilitate . . . . .	ease, help
failed to. . . . .	didn't
feasible . . . . .	can be done, workable
females. . . . .	women
finalize . . . . .	complete, finish
for a period of. . . . .	for
for example, _____ etc . . . . .	for example, such as
forfeit. . . . .	give up, lose
for the purpose of . . . . .	for, to
forward. . . . .	send

<u>Instead of</u>	<u>Try</u>
frequently . . . . .	often
function . . . . .	act, role, work
furnish. . . . .	give, send
has a requirement for. . . . .	needs
herein . . . . .	here
heretofore . . . . .	until now
herewith . . . . .	below, here
however. . . . .	but
identical. . . . .	same
identify . . . . .	find, name, show
immediately. . . . .	at once
impacted . . . . .	affected, changed
*implement . . . . .	carry out, start
*in accordance with. . . . .	by, following, per, under
in addition. . . . .	also, beside, too
in an effort to. . . . .	to
inasmuch as. . . . .	since
in a timely manner . . . . .	on time, promptly
inception. . . . .	start
incumbent upon . . . . .	must
inform . . . . .	tell
indicate . . . . .	show, write down
indication . . . . .	sign
initial . . . . .	first
in lieu of . . . . .	instead of
in order that. . . . .	for, so
in order to. . . . .	to
in regard to . . . . .	about, concerning, on
inter alia . . . . .	(omit)
interface with . . . . .	meet, work with
interpose no objection . . . . .	don't object
*in the amount of. . . . .	for
*in the event that . . . . .	if
in the near future . . . . .	shortly, soon
in the process of. . . . .	(omit)
in view of . . . . .	since
in view of the above . . . . .	so
is applicable to . . . . .	applies to
is authorized to . . . . .	may
is in consonance with. . . . .	agrees with, follows
is responsible for . . . . .	(omit), handles
it appears . . . . .	seems
*it is . . . . .	(omit)
it is essential. . . . .	must, need to
it is requested. . . . .	please, we request, I request
liaison. . . . .	discussion
limited number . . . . .	few
limitations. . . . .	limits

Instead ofTry

magnitude. . . . .	size
maintain. . . . .	keep, support
majority of. . . . .	most
maximum. . . . .	greatest, largest, most
methodology. . . . .	method
minimize. . . . .	decrease, lessen, reduce
minimum. . . . .	least, smallest
modify. . . . .	change
monitor. . . . .	check, watch
necessitate. . . . .	cause, need
notify. . . . .	let know, tell
not later than 10 May. . . . .	by 10 May, before 11 May
not later than 1600. . . . .	by 1600
notwithstanding. . . . .	in spite of, still
numerous. . . . .	many
objective. . . . .	aim, goal
obligate. . . . .	bind, compel
observe. . . . .	see
on a _____ basis. . . . .	(omit)
operate. . . . .	run, use, work
optimum. . . . .	best, greatest, most
option. . . . .	choice, way
parameters. . . . .	limits
participate. . . . .	take part
perform. . . . .	do
permit. . . . .	let
pertaining to. . . . .	about, of, on
point in time. . . . .	point, time
portion. . . . .	part
possess. . . . .	have, own
practicable. . . . .	practical
preclude. . . . .	prevent
previous. . . . .	earlier, past
previously. . . . .	before
prioritize. . . . .	rank
prior to. . . . .	before
proceed. . . . .	do, go ahead, try
procure. . . . .	buy
proficiency. . . . .	skill
*promulgate. . . . .	issue, publish
provide. . . . .	give, offer, say
provided that. . . . .	if
provides guidance for. . . . .	guides
purchase. . . . .	buy
pursuant to. . . . .	by, following, per, under
reflect. . . . .	say, show
regarding. . . . .	about, of, on
relative to. . . . .	about, on

<u>Instead of</u>	<u>Try</u>
relocate . . . . .	move
remain . . . . .	stay
remainder. . . . .	rest
remuneration . . . . .	pay, payment
render . . . . .	give, make
represents . . . . .	is
requests . . . . .	ask
require. . . . .	must, need
requirement. . . . .	need
reside . . . . .	live
retain . . . . .	keep
said, some, such . . . . .	the, this, that
selection. . . . .	choice
set forth in . . . . .	in
similar to . . . . .	like
solicit. . . . .	ask for, request
state-of-the-art . . . . .	latest
subject. . . . .	the, this, your
submit . . . . .	give, send
subsequent . . . . .	later, next
subsequently . . . . .	after, later, then
substantial. . . . .	large, much
successfully complete. . . . .	complete, pass
sufficient . . . . .	enough
take action to . . . . .	(omit)
task . . . . .	ask
terminate. . . . .	end, stop
the month of . . . . .	(omit)
there are. . . . .	(omit), exist
therefore. . . . .	so
therein. . . . .	there
there is . . . . .	(omit), exists
thereof. . . . .	its, their
the undersigned. . . . .	I
the use of . . . . .	(omit)
*this activity, command. . . . .	us, we
timely . . . . .	prompt
time period. . . . .	(either one)
transmit . . . . .	send
-type. . . . .	(omit)
under the provisions of. . . . .	under
until such time as . . . . .	until
utilize, utilization . . . . .	use
validate . . . . .	confirm
viable . . . . .	practical, workable
vice . . . . .	instead of, versus

Instead of

Try

warrant. . . . . call for, permit  
whereas. . . . . because, since  
with reference to. . . . . about  
with the exception of. . . . . except for  
witnessed. . . . . saw

your office. . . . . you

/ . . . . . and, or

\*\*\*\*\*

If it's possible to cut out a word, cut it out."

-George Orwell, novelist

\*\*\*\*\*

# ORGANIZATION

There are several methods of organizing information for your writing. Here are a few. It is unimportant which method you choose, but you must organize your facts in some fashion.

## 1. INFORMAL METHODS.

a. Brainstorming - Listing in random, rapid-fire fashion, anything that you can think of that has even the remotest relation to the subject.

b. Mindmapping - An inductive technique that breaks us of our rigid thinking patterns. You can use it to prepare speeches in minutes, make decisions, or predict change. It develops the intuitive, imaginative capacity—the "whole brain" approach.

c. Research - Different types of procedures.

- (1) Observation.
- (2) Interview.
- (3) Questionnaires.
- (4) Experimentation.
- (5) Reading.

## 2. FORMAL METHODS.

a. The Journalistic Formula.

- (1) Who?
- (2) What?
- (3) When?
- (4) Where?
- (5) Why?
- (6) How?

b. Topics - Typical way in which the human thinks about something.

- (1) What is it? (definition)
- (2) What is it like or unlike? (comparison)
- (3) What caused it? (relationship)
- (4) What is said about it? (testimony)

c. Topic Questions.

- (1) About physical objects.
- (2) About events.
- (3) About abstract concepts, (democracy, justice).
- (4) About propositions (statements to prove or disprove).



d. Problem Solving.

- (1) Specify what the problem is.
- (2) Analyze the problem.
- (3) Formulate one or more hypotheses about the unknown.
- (4) Test the hypotheses.

The first draft is part of search and discovery—the prewriting stage for most writers. Composing a rough draft turns up additional material which you will incorporate into the final product.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Be selective. Be concise. Don't tell  
someone what you know. Tell them what  
they need to know, what it means, and  
why it matters.

-General David C. Jones  
as Air Force Chief of  
Staff  
\*\*\*\*\*

# PACKAGING

## 1. PUT YOUR "BOTTOM LINE" UP FRONT.

a. Remember your reader is busy and easily distracted. Be smart in competing for his time and attention. Don't beat around the bush. Come cut and say what you want him to know.

b. Don't follow a pattern or organization that's easy on you but hard on him. Don't write the way you think—by leading up to your conclusions. From the reader's perspective, this clue-by-clue pattern is like a mystery story.

c. Follow the very helpful pattern found in newspaper articles: open with the most important information, and then taper off to the least.

## 2. OPEN WITH A STATEMENT OF PURPOSE.

a. If the purpose of your writing isn't apparent, start with a clear purpose statement.

### EXAMPLES:

Purpose. To tell you about the upcoming change to.....

Purpose. To explain how we'll.....

Purpose. To answer your question, "What is the..."

Purpose. To meet the CG's requirement to...

Purpose. To improve our.....

Purpose. To get your comments on.....

Dear Mr. Smith: I'm writing to tell you about...

Dear Mrs. Jones: I would like to thank you for...

Dear Mr. King: Could you help us with a problem...

Dear Colonel Smith: Here's the answer to the question you asked about.....

b. Give your reader a clear idea of why you're writing: to inform or to persuade.

c. If your purpose in writing is apparent from the subject line in your document, omit this formal purpose statement.

## 3. WRITE YOUR MAIN POINT.

a. What's the one sentence you'd keep if you could keep only one? That sentence is your main point—your bottom line. It may be your specific request, recommendation, answer, tasking, conclusion, or a short summary of your key points.

b. Don't delay stating your main point. Get right to it. When you can, start your paper with that sentence in a paragraph by itself for emphasis. Put it right after your purpose statement.

- c. Follow these patterns to put your main point first:

EXAMPLES:

First, state your

Then, give your

Recommendation. . . . .	.Reasons
Request . . . . .	.Reasons
Answer. . . . .	.Supporting Explanations
Conclusion. . . . .	.Supporting Arguments
Key Taskings. . . . .	.Specific Required Actions
Summary of Main Points. . . . .	.General Discussion of Ideas

- d. Remember, readers need to know the main point early so they can appreciate the relevance of everything you say.

- e. If no single sentence stands out, create one to keep from wandering aimlessly. Occasionally, as in a set of instructions or a reply to various questions, all your points may be equally important. In this case, start with a sentence that tells your reader what to expect.

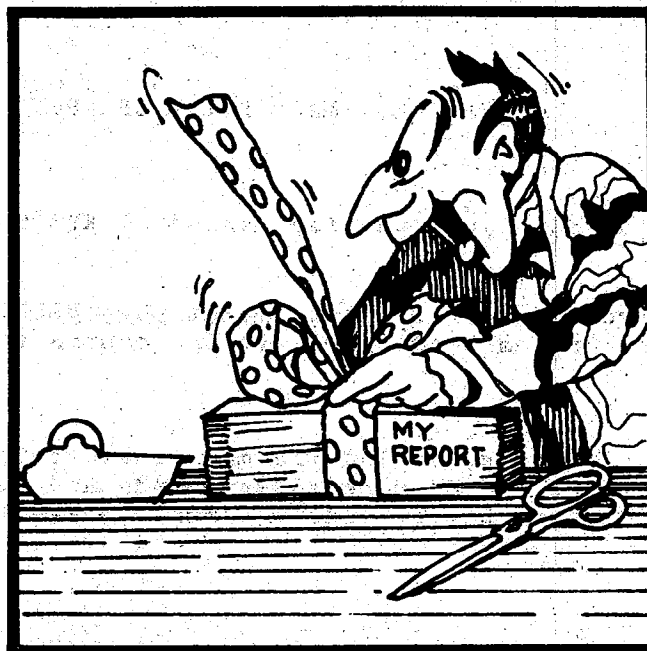
EXAMPLE: Here are your training quotas for FY 87:

EXAMPLE: I saw these strengths and weaknesses in your program:

EXAMPLE: Here are the main points we discussed at the S3 Conference:

- f. In most cases, plunge right in.

Illustration by Joe Halloran.



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**EXAMPLE: MAIN POINT HIDDEN**

**SUBJECT: Jump Pay Request**

1. This responds to your request for a determination of your eligibility to receive parachute duty pay during the period of the last 90 days.
2. The regulation specifically states that "students undergoing training above the entry level while undergoing such training are entitled to pay as may be appropriate.
3. Specifically, since the course in question is above entry level, you are entitled to parachute duty pay during the period you were undergoing training.
4. A copy of this letter and your orders assigning you to the training course should be submitted to your MILPO for preparation of appropriate forms.

This example has many shortcomings--it is wordy, impersonal, and passive--but worst of all, it delays the most important information.

Look at a revised version of this writing--with the main idea at the beginning:

**EXAMPLE: MAIN POINT UP FRONT**

**SUBJECT: Jump Pay Request**

1. You are entitled to jump pay for period of XYZ Course 3-90, 6 Jul-3 Sep 90.
2. To be paid, you must fill out forms at your MILPO. Take this letter and a copy of the orders sending you to the course to MILPO.

As you can see, packaging, moving the main idea to the beginning, improves the example. Getting rid of unnecessary words and details helps, of course, but having the "bottom line up front" makes the most difference.

## BOTTOM LINE UP FRONT AND ORGANIZATION

### Practical Exercise

You work in the S3 Section (training and operations). Your audience is company commanders and executive officers. Identify the bottom line in the following paragraph. Put the bottom line up front and package the rest using subparagraphs and headers. Revise the sentences where needed. Give the paragraph a label.

#### PARAGRAPH

On the ARTEP, the soldiers were enthusiastic, but they lacked a lot of necessary equipment. The soldiers were cold and dirty. They did not bring the proper gear out to the field with them. The NBC Officer initiated the NBC attack late. Many soldiers did not go into the proper MOPP status. The cooks did an outstanding job preparing the meals on time and making them appetizing. The SI shop did an excellent job with POWs and evacuating casualties. The time on target missions missed the ARTEP standards. The Safety Officers were not always safety certified. All in all, the last ARTEP did not go as smoothly as it should have.

# ACTIVE vs PASSIVE WRITING

To strengthen the basic structure of Army writing, we must make a change in the style of our writing.

## The Old Style

Passive sentences are often indirect, unfocused, and confusing. Look the example given below:

As a result of problems which were discovered during initial testing, it is desired that additional equipment testing be conducted.

In the active voice this sentence becomes more direct:

We want to do more equipment testing because our initial tests revealed problems.

The passive sentence does not reveal who wants more testing and who conducted the tests. In the active voice, however, the sentence shows that "we" did the tests and want to do more. The active sentence is shorter and easier to read, as well.

## HOW TO RECOGNIZE THE PASSIVE VOICE

--It uses at least two verbs: one of the eight forms of to be, plus the past participle of a main verb.

You should be on the lookout for these words:

am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been

PLUS

a main verb usually ending in--

ed (selected) en (taken) n (shown) t (caught) d (told)

We see the passive voice frequently in Army writing. For example, think of all the times you have read these phrases: is requested, will be taken, to be announced, are being sent, and have been reviewed. When you use these words, you are writing in the passive voice.

--It is NOT a "be" verb plus an adjective: "The troops were tired."

--It is NOT "have, has, or had" plus a verb: "The battalion has maneuvered..."

--It is NOT a be verb plus an "-ing" verb: "The captain was commanding..."

## The New Style

What is active writing? It is writing sentences that put the ACTOR or DOER before the ACTION or VERB. Technically, that means we must write sentences with verbs in the active voice, not the passive voice.

For example:

ACTIVE WRITING: The battalion commander lost the document.

PASSIVE WRITING: The document was lost by the battalion commander.

Most Army writers overuse the passive voice. Some writers believe that it sounds more "official" and "military." Others simply use it because they see it in documents daily—they don't even stop to realize whether it is passive voice or active voice.

Now, you may be wondering, "Why is the Army so concerned about passive voice?" Here are the answers:

--Passive sentences are often vague.

After a biological attack, you will be told which method of decontamination to use.

--Passive sentences can hide responsibility.

As a result of problems which were discovered during initial testing, it is desired that additional equipment testing be conducted.

--Passive sentences are longer than active sentences that send the same message.

Passive--The winning company was commanded by CPT Jones. (8 words)

Active--CPT Jones commanded the winning company. (6 words)

You may notice that the passive voice appears in the past tense, present tense, and future tense. Do not confuse passive voice with past tense. The examples that follow show both active and passive verbs in the several tenses.

<u>TENSE</u>	<u>ACTIVE VERBS</u>	<u>PASSIVE VERBS</u>
Present	Travelers visit New York.	New York <u>is visited</u> by travelers.
Past	Travelers visited New York.	New York <u>was visited</u> by travelers.
Future	Travelers will visit New York.	New York will <u>be visited</u> by travelers.
Present perfect	Travelers have visited New York.	New York has <u>been visited</u> by travelers.

Past perfect	Travelers had visited New York.	New York had <u>been visited</u> by travelers.
Future perfect	Travelers will have visited New York.	New York will have <u>been visited</u> by travelers.
Present progressive	Travelers are visiting New York.	New York <u>is being visited</u> by travelers.
Past progressive	Travelers were visiting New York.	New York <u>was being visited</u> by travelers.
Future progressive	Travelers will be visiting New York.	

Although sometimes you need to use the passive voice, most of the time you should avoid it. Learn to use it when you really want to shift the emphasis of your writing, or when you do not know who the actor or doer of the action is.

### Three Ways to Change Passive Sentences to Active Ones

1. Put the doer up front.

PASSIVE: The report was submitted by SGT Jones.

ACTIVE: SGT Jones submitted the report.

2. Drop part of the verb.

PASSIVE: The meeting was held at Fort Knox.

ACTIVE: The meeting was at Fort Knox.

3. Change the verb.

PASSIVE: He will be required to attend.

ACTIVE: He must attend.

\*\*\*\*\*

Men of few words are the best men.

-Shakespeare

\*\*\*\*\*



## EXAMPLES OF WEAK PASSIVE VERBS

### Practical Exercise

At times, it's appropriate to emphasize the receiver of the action. But passive writing is often wordy, evasive, and awkward. If that's the case, change the passive sentence to active. Here are five examples of weak passives. Change them to the active.

1. Request is made that the 75th Support Battalion be exempt from all support commitments during the period 8 March through 7 April 1989.
2. Departure from the installation will be accomplished using Gates 2 and 3.
3. Your journal will be presented to the battalion executive officer by 0730.
4. Arms room locks must be checked hourly at irregular intervals by the CQ.
5. It is necessary that the material be received in this office by 1200.

~~SOLUTIONS~~

1. Please exempt the 75th Support Battalion from all support commitments from 8 March through 7 April 1989.
2. Leave by Gates 2 and 3.
3. Give your journal to the battalion executive officer by 0730.
4. The CQ must check the arms room locks hourly at irregular intervals.
5. The material must arrive here by 1200. (or) We must have the material by 1200.

## ACTIVE VOICE

### Practical Exercise

Underline the passive constructions, then rewrite the following sentences in the active voice. Where possible, assign responsibility by using personal pronouns.

1. It is necessary that the material be received in this office by 28 November.

2. It is conceivable that the fuel scarcities of FY88 will be exceeded by the FY89 fuel constraints.

3. The Brigade Training Plan has been forwarded to this command for review and comment.

4. If it is desired that essential maintenance personnel be allowed to compete on the basketball team, this command must anticipate some increase in vehicular down-time.

5. It is requested that all personnel planning to take leave in December fill in the enclosed schedule.

**STYLE**

**Practical Exercise**

1. You are the new company safety officer. As you look through the publications and records your predecessor left you, you notice—

- a. Many regulations have not been updated.
- b. Monthly safety inspections have not been done the last five months.

2. On your initial safety inspection, the following deficiencies were noted by you:

- a. Three fire extinguishers are not charged.
- b. A fire evacuation plan has not been written for the barracks.
- c. Division Safety Letters are not posted on the bulletin board.
- d. Three exit lights are burned out.
- e. Oil, nails, and other debris have been left on the ground in the motor pool.

3. As the safety officer, write a Memorandum for Record for this situation.

Make all sentences active. Use packaging.

~~SOLUTIONS~~

1.

a. No one has updated the safety regulations. (or) Many regulations need updating.

b. No one conducted safety inspections the last five months.

2. On my initial safety inspection, I noted the following.....

a. Someone has not charged three fire extinguishers. (or) Three fire extinguishers need charging.

b. The barracks needs a fire evacuation plan. (or) The Safety Officer hasn't written a fire evacuation plan.

c. Division Safety Letters need posting....

d. We need to replace three exit lights. (or) Three exit lights are out.

e. Soldiers have left oil, nails, and other debris on the ground in the motor pool.

ABCD-EF-GH

5 April 1989

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Safety concerns

1. As the new company safety officer, I have looked through the publications and records on hand. I noticed that many regulations need updating. I also noticed that during the last five months, no one conducted a monthly safety inspection.
2. On my initial safety inspection, I noted:
  - a. Three fire extinguishers need charging.
  - b. We need to write a fire evacuation plan for the barracks.
  - c. We need to post Division Safety Letters on the bulletin board.
  - d. Three exit lights are out.
  - e. Soldiers have left oil, nails, and other debris on the ground in the motor pool.

Signature Block

# EDITING

## THE QUICK SCREEN EDIT

This simple technique helps identify major violations of the guidelines for Army writing. Here's how to use it.

1. Use a standard highlighter.

2. Read the paper rapidly. As you read, highlight:

a. The "bottom line," the purpose of the writing. (Is it near the beginning of the document? If not, use the highlighter to bracket the bottom line and draw an arrow to the place where it should go.)

b. Overuse of the passive voice. (Any forms of the verb "be" used with a past participle—usually a verb ending in —en, —ed, —n, —t, or —d).

c. Any unnecessary long words, phrases, or jargon.

d. Spelling, punctuation, or grammar mistakes that you notice.

e. Sentences that begin with "It is..., There were..., There are..."

f. Long paragraphs that you could break down into shorter ones.

3. Revise the writing. In the revision:

a. Move the "bottom line" to the beginning of the document.

b. Change the other highlighted problems, but only those problems.

c. Check the writing for packaging.

A final comment about editing another's writing—Do not revise it simply because it does not use exactly the same words that you would have used.

## EXAMPLE OF A QUICK-SCREEN EDIT

It is important to note that senior officers are looked to by soldiers and subordinate officers for examples of what to do, for guidance on how to do it, and for the resources adequate to accomplishment of assigned and implied tasks. Needless to say, this requires that senior officers, or lifers, be competent in their profession. In addition to branch, functional area and rank. They must know the tools of the soldier's trade. Weapons, tactics, and doctrine. By the very nature of the military profession, all officers are soldiers first, he must understand the Army and how it operates at several levels of conflict in various theaters. Understanding contemporary threats, knowing how to accomplish tasks, and protecting themselves and their soldiers are made the primary responsibilities of senior officers.

\*\*\*\*\*  
I KNOW THAT  
YOU BELIEVE YOU  
UNDERSTAND WHAT  
YOU THINK I SAID,  
BUT,  
I AM NOT SURE  
YOU REALIZE THAT  
WHAT YOU HEARD  
IS NOT  
WHAT I MEANT.

-Unknown

\*\*\*\*\*



## EXAMPLE AFTER REVISION

Soldiers and subordinate officers look to senior officers for examples of what to do, for guidance on how to do it, and for the resources to accomplish tasks. This requires that senior officers be competent in their profession, in addition to branch, functional area, and rank. They must know the tools of the soldier's trade—weapons, tactics, and doctrine. By the very nature of the military profession, all officers are soldiers first. They must understand the Army and how it operates at several levels of conflict in various theaters. The primary responsibilities of senior officers are to understand contemporary threats, to know how to accomplish tasks, to protect themselves and their soldiers.

\*\*\*\*\*

Look at your work as though it were done  
by your enemy...If we look to see where  
it is wrong, we shall see this and make  
it right. If we look at it to see where  
it is right, we shall see this and not  
make it right.

-Samuel Butler, English Novelist

\*\*\*\*\*

## EDITING

### Practical Exercise

Using your highlighter, quick-screen edit the following passage for spelling, grammar, and jargon errors. Also highlight any use of the passive voice.

Staff Sergeant Holbert, foresight, keen analytical mind, sound judgement, and enthusiastic approach to numerous problems, along with his great sense of responsibility, initiative, and cooperative attitude, has contributed in a large measure to the accomplishment of all section, and platoon missions. SSG Holbert has shown these traits while assigned as senior section Sergeant, During Reforger 85, Battlion Calfer's, and FTX's. Also during EXTEV's, and during the battlion's training exercise at the NTC, where SSG Holbert, and his section performed many mission, which were directly responsible for the Battlion's accomplishment of their mission. SSG Holbert obtained the highest score on his SQT, for his grade level in the Battlion. His pride, in his duty performance, and apperence, and ability, to train his soldiers in all aspects of their job. Does himself this battlion and the United Stated Army Great Credit.

\*\*\*\*\*

OLD: "By virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution of the United States of America, and as President of the United States of America, it is hereby ordered as follows..."

NEW: "As President of the United States, I direct..."

Old and new beginning to Executive Order

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

Kill the weeds  
around the building.

The commander desires that  
measures employing chemical  
defoliant dispersal and/or mechanical  
means be implemented to facilitate  
a reduction in the growth of non-  
cultivated vegetation adjacent to this  
facility.

\*\*\*\*\*

## CORRECTNESS

### Practical Exercise

Correct the following errors in sentence structure and grammar.

1. Each pronoun agrees with their antecedent.
2. Just between you and I, case is important.
3. Verbs has to agree with their subject.
4. Watch out for irregular verbs which has crept into our language.
5. Don't use no double negatives.
6. A writer mustn't shift your point of view.
7. When dangling, don't use participles.
8. Join independent clauses properly, use conjunctions and proper punctuation.
9. Don't write a run-on sentence you must punctuate it.
10. About sentence fragments.
11. In letters themes reports articles and stuff like that we use commas to keep a string of items apart.
12. Its important to use apostrophe's right.
13. Don't use commas, which aren't necessary.
14. Don't abbrev.
15. Check to see if you any words out.
16. In my opinion I think that an author when he is writing shouldn't get into the habit of making use of too many unnecessary words that he does not really need in order to put his message across.
17. About repetition, the repetition of a word might be really effective repetition—take, for instance, Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln.
18. Minimize jargon, check?
19. Eschew obfuscation.
20. The passive voice should not be used.
21. Use the diktionarie.

~~SOLUTIONS~~

1. Each pronoun agrees with its antecedent.
2. Just between you and me, case is important.
3. Verbs have to agree with their subject.
4. Watch out for irregular verbs which have crept into our language.
5. Don't use any double negatives.
6. A writer mustn't shift his point of view.
7. When writing, don't use dangling participles.
8. Join independent clauses properly; use conjunctions and proper punctuation.
9. Don't write a run-on sentence. You must punctuate it.
10. Be cautious about sentence fragments.
11. In letters, themes, reports, articles, and stuff like that, we use commas to keep a string of items apart.
12. Its important to use apostrophes right.
13. Don't use commas which aren't necessary.
14. Don't abbreviate.
15. Check to see if you left any words out.
16. An author shouldn't use too many unnecessary words to put his message across.
17. The repetition of a word might be really effective—take, for instance, Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln.
18. Minimize jargon.
19. Avoid confusion.
20. Don't use passive voice.
21. Use the dictionary.

# CLARITY INDEX

## MEASURE THE READABILITY OF YOUR WRITING

### 1. Compute the Clarity Index and Reading Grade Level of your writing.

a. The Clarity Index (CI) and Reading Grade Level (RGL) suggest the reading difficulty of written work. Generally, the lower the CI and RGL, the easier the material is to understand.

b. Adjust the reading level at least TWO GRADES LOWER than the educational level of the majority of the target audience. This will make the reading very comfortable for them.

c. Aim for a 10th to 12th grade reading level for the most part.

d. Use this only as a guide. The readability of written work doesn't depend solely on its reading level. While short sentences and short words affect readability, so do other factors: logic, organization, usage, punctuation, spelling, and directness.

### 2. Follow these steps to compute the CI and RGL.

a. Select a sample of at least 200 words.

b. Count the words.

(1) Start counting at the first word of each paragraph.

(2) Don't count paragraph headings and titles.

(3) Count any acronym or number as one word.

c. Count the sentences.

(1) Count sentences or intentional sentence fragments in the sample.

(2) Count as separate sentences two independent clauses separated by a semi-colon. (Example of two "separate" sentences: The troops were ready for battle; still they hoped for peace.)

d. Count the long words.

(1) Count the number of long words (three or more syllables.)

(2) Count syllables as you say the words. (in-stall-a-tion = 4 syllables)

(3) Count as one syllable any brevity code or acronym that doesn't spell a word. (NCO = not a word = 1 syllable; ARTEP = 2 syllables)

e. Compute the average sentence length. (Divide the number of words by the number of sentences.) The target is 15 words per sentence.

f. Compute the percentage of long words. (Divide the number of long words by the number of words in the sample.) The target is 15 percent.

g. Add the average sentence length to the percentage of long words. The sum is the Clarity Index. Aim for an index of 30. Below 20, the writing could be too abrupt. Over 40, it's probably too difficult to understand.

h. Multiply the Clarity Index by 0.4. The result is the Reading Grade Level. Aim for 10th to 12th grade maximum.

3. Use this simplified formula.

a. Total number of words \_\_\_\_\_.

b. Number of sentences \_\_\_\_\_.

c. Number of long words \_\_\_\_\_.

d. Average sentence length ( $a \div b$ ) \_\_\_\_\_.

e. Percentage of long words ( $c \div a$ ) x 100% \_\_\_\_\_.

f. Clarity Index ( $d + e$ ) \_\_\_\_\_.  
(The target is 25 to 30.)

g. Reading Grade Level ( $f \times 0.4$ ) \_\_\_\_\_.  
(The target is 10th to 12th grade.)

\*\*\*\*\*

Before D-Day a British Officer told his staff to achieve clarity by imagining they were writing for a tired man reading in poor light.

\*\*\*\*\*

## CLARITY INDEX AND READING GRADE LEVEL

### Practical Exercise

Calculate the clarity index of the following memorandum:

MEMORANDUM FOR: COMMANDER, 5-33 ARMOR

SUBJECT: Administrative Action for Misconduct of PV2 Joe Jones

1. It was reported to this office that on 20 September 1986, the aforementioned individual was apprehended by the military police for loitering in the vicinity of the post exchange store facility at the Fort Knox Military Reservation at approximately 0200. Said individual was intoxicated and disorderly in his demeanor upon his apprehension and was taken to the installation's primary medical treatment facility for the administration of a Blood Alcohol Test. Following that event, the service member was released to the custody of his first-line supervisor, and a telephonic follow-up report was submitted to his organization staff duty personnel.

2. This misconduct is prejudicial to the good order and discipline of this military organization, the community, and the United States Army, and as such, should not be tolerated. Consequently, the service member should be counseled by members of his office for his impropriety and be admonished that similar misconduct should not be repeated.

3. Recommend that service member be formally reprimanded and admonished and then be required to acknowledge receipt of the administrative action within seven calendar days of its imposition, in accordance with the provisions of AR 600-37.

\*\*\*

Calculate the Clarity Index and Reading Grade Level:

a. Count total number of words: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Count number of sentences: \_\_\_\_\_

c. Count number of long words:  
(3 or more syllables) \_\_\_\_\_

Average sentence length:

B

A

Percentage of long words:

A

C

+

CLARITY INDEX =

x 0.4

READING GRADE LEVEL =



## QUICK SCREEN EDIT REWRITE AND CLARITY INDEX - UNIT SAFETY SOP

### Practical Exercise

**SITUATION:** In preparation for an IG inspection, your company commander directs you to write a Unit Safety SOP (no one seems to know where the "old" SOP went). An excerpt of your first draft appears below.

#### Part I

**REQUIREMENT:** Using the quick-screen edit, highlight misspellings, use of passive voice, jargon, and obvious grammar faults in the excerpt. Take five minutes to complete the quick-screen edit.

\*

\*

\*

#### Accident Reports (DA Form 285)

When any member of this organization becomes involved in a duty-related accident, an investigation of the accident will be conduct ASAP and a DA Form 285 (United States Army Accident Report) will be completed in compliance with Annex C of this SOP.

#### Safety Inspections

The Unit Safety NCO and the Unit Fire Marshall will both jointly conduct a monthly safety inspection. The biletts, day room, motor shop, orderly room and company supply annex will be checked. For compliance with Annex B (Unit Safety Checklist) to this SOP and applicable safety regulations. The inspectors will record their findings in the Inspection Record Log in the Unit Safety on the spot: such as removal of obvious hazardous conditions (oil spills, blocked exits, inop fire lights, etc.) should be taken. The First Sergeant will initiate corrective action on other safety deficiencies that cannot be squared away immediately.

#### Unit Safety Council.

Higher requires that this unit conduct a quarterly Safety Council Meeting. Members will include the XO, First Sergeant, Training NCO, Supply Sergeant, Motor Sergeant, Unit Fire Marshal, and Unit Safety NCO (recorder). At this meeting the following areas, as a minimum will be discussed:

1. Results of monthly safety inspections.
2. Review of any accidents since the last meeting.
3. Update status of corrective measures.
4. Safety Training.

The old man will review the minutes of this meeting. Then they will be filed in the Unit Safety Book which is kept on the bookshelf in the First Sergeant's orifice.

## UNIT SAFETY SOP - REWRITE

### Practical Exercise

#### Part II

**REQUIREMENT:** Having highlighted the obvious errors, you are ready to rewrite the SOP. Make sure you correct the errors noted and you eliminate unclear and unneeded words and phrases. When you complete your rewrite, apply the clarity index formula to the revision. Remember that our goal should be a clarity index of 30.

#### NOTES:

# LIST OF COMMON PROBLEM AREAS

Part I. The Army Writing Program instructors have identified six problem areas which appear consistently in student writing.

Students:

1. Fail to put the bottom line up front.
2. Fail to support the bottom line with organized substance.
3. Sacrifice substance to achieve brevity.
4. Fail to write in the active voice. Refer to DA Pam 600-67, Effective Writing for Army Leaders, included in your AOB Handbook.
5. Fail to write concisely; they use wordy expressions.
6. Fail to proofread for correctness and grammar.

Part II. The Army Writing Program instructors have identified 12 problem areas with military style which appear consistently in student writing.

Students:

1. Write "thru" instead of "through." However, when addressing military correspondence, use "THRU".
2. Omit the last comma in a series. To avoid confusion, use a comma before "and."
3. Omit the comma separating two main clauses joined by the coordinating conjunctions "and," "but," "or," "nor," and "for."
4. Fail to use numbers correctly before time, money, or measurement. Write "4 hours", "\$3.00", or "6 inches."
5. Write "%" instead of "percent."
6. Write plural abbreviations incorrectly. (e.g., NCO's, OER's, and EER's). An apostrophe should NOT be used.
7. Write rank incorrectly. Write second lieutenant's rank as "2LT," not "2lt," or "Lt."
8. Write time incorrectly. Write time as "1300" not "1300 hours."
9. Fail to write out an acronym the first time they use it.

10. Fail to write the date correctly. The date should read either "22 Nov 93" or "22 November 1993." Students should not use "22 Nov 1993" or "22 November 93."

11. Incorrectly write "S1" as "S-1."

12. Often misuse the apostrophe in possessives and pronouns.

# **SECTION II**

## **MILITARY FORMATS**

# THE LETTER

1. **SUMMARY.** The letter (previously known as the nonmilitary letter) is a very formal means of communication. Use it for official command business outside the military and for official personal business. Use a civilian-style format.

2. **USES.** Use the letter for:

a. Official business with civilians (to include those employed by the Department of Defense) and any civilian agencies.

(1) Invitations.

(2) Inquiries.

(3) Replies to letters of indebtedness.

b. Correspondence with military members addressed by name.

(1) Personal welcomes.

(2) Congratulations.

(3) Introductions.

(4) Requests.

c. Correspondence with government agencies (federal, state, and local).

d. Letters of appreciation or commendation for volunteers, family members, employees, and soldiers.

3. **GUIDELINES.**

a. Use letterhead stationery for the first page, and use plain bond paper for all continuing pages.

b. Use large type (pica/10 pitch) for easy reading.

c. Avoid abbreviations, brevity codes, acronyms, and military jargon. If you must use them, spell them out the first time followed by the abbreviation in parentheses.

d. Reply to a letter with a letter. Don't use an endorsement.

e. Don't use office symbols. Instead, spell out the office title.

f. Indent paragraphs, but don't number them. Avoid subparagraphs.

4. REFERENCE. AR 25-50, Preparing and Managing Correspondence.

\*\*\*\*\*

Abraham Lincoln once began a letter  
to his brother-in-law this way:

Your request for eighty dollars,  
I do not think it best to comply  
with now.

\*\*\*\*\*

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
Organization Name  
Geographic Location-Nine-Digit Zip Code

January 2, 1989

Mr. John A. Doe  
123 Main Street  
Lawton, Oklahoma 73501

Dear Mr. Doe:

I'm writing in reply to your questions about how we in the Army now prepare a letter (previously called the nonmilitary letter). Before I begin, though, I should mention my information comes from Army Regulation 25-50, Preparing and Managing Correspondence. It's our guide for Army writing.

First, we always put letters on letterhead stationery and type them, preferably in 10 pitch style. We adjust the margins so the text will appear to be framed. (Note this letter is a good example of framing.)

To show when the letter was signed, we put a civilian date, typed, and centered two lines below the last line of the letterhead. We can't use date stamps on original copies, but we can on file copies.

The greeting in our letter is always on the second line below the last line of the address. The first line of the text of the letter then goes two lines below the greeting.

You'll notice we single space the body of a letter and double space between paragraphs. When starting a new paragraph, we indent four spaces and begin typing on the fifth. We never number our paragraphs in letters and always try to keep them less than 1 inch deep.

For the sake of clarity, we don't use abbreviations in the address or signature blocks of our letters. If we need to use military acronyms for brevity, we always spell them out first.

We try to keep our letters short and to the point--no more than two pages if possible. When they're more than a page, we leave a minimum of two lines of text for the second page. On a letter with two or more pages, we leave at least a 1-inch margin at the bottom of each page.

For letters of more than one page, we center the page number on the fifth line from the top edge of the paper. (Note the dash on each side of the page number.) The first line of the text starts on the fifth line below the number of the page. We try to keep the margins consistent with the preceding page.



The signature block for the letter is always in upper and lower case. Again, we don't use abbreviations (except those authorized in paragraph 4-5 of the regulation). Military personnel use "U.S. Army" following their rank when writing a letter.

If the letter has an enclosure or attachment, we identify it fully in the text of the letter. We type the word "Enclosure" or "Attachment" at the left margin on the second line below the signature block. But we don't show the number(s) or list them.

In closing, when writing letters, we follow the Army Writing Style, a form of business writing. We try to be clear, concise, organized, and right to the point. Our goal is to transmit a clear message quickly to the intended reader.

I hope this answers your questions about the Army letter. (If you have any more questions, please call me at (502) 624-1018, and I'll be glad to answer them.)

Sincerely,

First Name MI Last Name  
Rank (spelled out), U.S. Army  
Title (spelled out)

Enclosure

**SAMPLE WELCOME LETTER**

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
**Headquarters, 2d Battalion, 27th Armored Regiment**  
**3d Armored Division (Spearhead)**  
**APO New York 09079-1111**

**November 13, 1988**

**Second Lieutenant Fred Jones**  
**Troop A, 2d Squadron, 12th Cavalry**  
**2d Armor Training Brigade**  
**Fort Knox, Kentucky 40121**

**Dear Lieutenant Jones:**

Welcome to the "Battering Rams" and the 3d Armored Division. I'm happy to learn that you will soon become a member of this fine battalion.

The 2d Battalion, 27th Armored Regiment is an M1A1 equipped battalion in the 3d Brigade. We're located at Oberberg, approximately 20 miles due north of Frankfurt.

I am assigning Second Lieutenant Murray Graddison as your sponsor, and you should receive a letter from him shortly. If there is anything we can do to help make your move here smoother, please let us know.

I am looking forward to your becoming a member of the battalion. I trust you will find your tour of duty both personally and professionally rewarding.

Sincerely,

**James B. Jensen**  
**Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army**  
**Commanding Officer**

## LETTER OF COMPLAINT

### Practical Exercise 1

Using the AWS format and the information below, write an appropriate letter to the president of Colaco to include proper letterhead, date, and inside address.

1. The Colaco machine in your company day room frequently breaks down. It also takes users' money, often dispenses a different type of soft drink than shown on the buttons, and often dispenses warm drinks. A number of soldiers have complained, and the first sergeant's calls to the local distributor have not resolved the problems.

2. The machine is located in the A Company, 2d Battalion, 37th Armor Day Room, Building #4021, Fort Benning, Georgia, 12321.

3. The first sergeant spoke with a Miss James when he called the local distributor. He called twice in September, once on October 17, and again on November 4.

4. The president of the local Colaco-Cola Bottling Company, Mr. Howard Wharton, is a member of the local Association of the United States Army Chapter. His address is:

Colaco of Columbus  
17408 Buena Vista Road  
Columbus, Georgia 32417

## LETTER OF COMMENDATION

### Practical Exercise 2

Write a Letter of Commendation to Specialist Albert B. Davis for achieving a maximum (300 point) score on the Army Physical Readiness Test. Prepare the letter for your company commander's signature. The test was yesterday. Your unit is Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 37th Armor, APO New York 09326. Your Company Commander is CPT Joseph F. Weber (Armor).

# THE FORMAL MEMORANDUM

1. **SUMMARY.** The formal memorandum is our basic document for correspondence. It replaces the military letter and is formal. While it serves a variety of purposes, it's primarily for formal correspondence within military channels and for tasking subordinate units.

2. **USES.** Use the memorandum:

a. To correspond with any command, staff, or activity within the Department of Defense.

b. To correspond with any echelon of command.

c. To correspond formally.

d. To task.

e. To start military and civilian personnel actions.

f. To commend or to show appreciation to Department of the Army employees.

g. To forward (as an enclosure or attachment) any non-transmitting forms that must go outside the installation or command.

h. To document conversations, events, understandings, or agreements.

3. **GUIDELINES.**

a. Don't use a memorandum outside the military, such as for writing to families of soldiers.

b. Use a dot-matrix printer to print the memorandum if your commander allows it. But use a typewriter or near-letter quality printer when writing to anyone in the Department of Defense outside the Army or to the Army's Vice Chief of Staff or higher.

c. Use an endorsement to the memorandum either to forward it or to answer it. Put the endorsement on the same page of the memorandum if it fits. Number the pages in order, since the endorsement is an integral part of the memorandum.

4. **REFERENCE.** AR 25-50, Preparing and Managing Correspondence.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
Organization Name  
Geographic Location—Nine-Digit Zip Code

S: SUSPENSE DATE

OFFICE SYMBOL (MARKS NUMBER)

DATE

MEMORANDUM FOR Addressee's Title, Organization, Geographic Location, and  
Nine-Digit Zip Code

SUBJECT: Preparing a Memorandum

1. Purpose. To explain how to prepare a memorandum.
2. Summary. The guidelines below show how to set the margins, page numbers, indentations, and type. They also describe where to put the key elements of a memorandum's heading, body, and closing.
3. Margins. Allow 1 inch for the left and right margins. Leave at least 1 inch at the bottom of the first page.
4. Type. Use pica, courier, or other 10-pitch type. Substitute with elite, 12-pitch or other available type when larger type isn't available. (Note that this memorandum is in 12 pitch.)
5. Heading.
  - a. Type the OFFICE SYMBOL followed by the MARKS NUMBER, in parentheses, at the left margin two lines below the seal.
  - b. Stamp or type the DATE, military style, on the same line as the office symbol, ending at the right margin. If the text indicates a SUSPENSE DATE, type it two lines above the office symbol line ending as close as possible to the right margin.
  - c. Type MEMORANDUM FOR on the third line below the office symbol. Begin the single address one space after MEMORANDUM FOR. For multiple addresses, see AR 25-50. Addresses may be in upper and lower case or all upper case.
  - d. Type the SUBJECT of the memorandum on the second line below the last line of an address. Keep subject to 10 words or less if possible.
6. Body. Begin the first paragraph of the TEXT at the left margin on the third line below the last line of the subject.
7. Closing.

a. When used, type the **AUTHORITY LINE** at the left margin on the second line below the last line of the text.

b. Type the **SIGNATURE BLOCK** on the fifth line below the **AUTHORITY LINE** or the last line of the text. Begin in the center of the page. Type the name in all caps. To preserve block style format, use short title abbreviations and any mixture of full or abbreviated rank and branch.

c. Identify enclosures, if any, flush with the left margin. Begin on the same line as the **SIGNATURE BLOCK**.

d. Indicate copies furnished (CF) to other offices two lines below enclosures.

JOHN A. WHITE  
CPT, Armor  
Commanding

OFFICE SYMBOL

SUBJECT: Preparing a Memorandum

1. Special Instructions for Continuation Pages.

a. Type the OFFICE SYMBOL at the left margin on the eighth line from the top edge of the paper.

b. Type the SUBJECT of the memorandum at the left margin on the next line below the office symbol.

c. Begin the continuation of the text at the left margin on the third line below the subject phrase. When continuing a memorandum on another page--

(1) Don't divide a paragraph of three lines or less between pages; at least two lines of the divided paragraph must appear on each page.

(2) Include at least two words on each page of any sentence divided between pages.

(3) Avoid hyphenation whenever possible. Don't hyphenate a word between pages.

d. Don't type the authority line and the signature block on the continuation page without at least two lines of the last paragraph. If, however, a paragraph or subparagraph has only one line, place it alone on the continuation page with the authority line and signature block.

e. Place the page number approximately 1 to 1 1/2 inches from the bottom of the page. Center the page number.

2. References. Normally put references in the first paragraph. If you refer to a publication, document, phone call, or meeting in the text, spell it out there.

AUTHORITY LINE:

4 Encls

1. Ltr, Office Symbol, Date
2. DA Form XXXX
3. Orders XXX-XX, Date
4. AR XXX-XX, Date, Title

JOHN J. JOHNSON

CPT, AR or Captain, AR

CF:

Addressee #1's Title, Organization Name, ATTN: Office Symbol

Addressee #2's Title, Organization Name, ATTN: Office Symbol



## NOTES

## NOTES

SAMPLE FORMAL MEMORANDUM WITH HEADERS

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
Headquarters, 245th Armored Brigade  
XXX Corps  
Fort Anywhere, New Jersey 13333-4444

ABCDE-FG (Marks Number)

26 September 1990

MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDER, 5-33 AR

SUBJECT: Misconduct of PV2 Joe Jones

1. Purpose. To recommend administrative action against a soldier in your command.

2. Recommendation. That you counsel, admonish, and give a letter of reprimand to PV2 Joseph P. Jones, 333-22-1111, for his misconduct on 20 Sep 90.

3. Discussion. Details of reported misconduct are as follows:

a. When? 0200, 20 Sep 90.

b. Where? Vicinity of Fort Anywhere PX Storage Room, Bldg 2234.

c. What?

(1) Jones was loitering when the MPs apprehended him. They found him drunk and disorderly, and took him to the hospital for a Blood Alcohol Test (no results available yet).

(2) The MPs released him to SFC Robert J. Jones, his supervisor, at 0430. Then they called your staff duty officer with their report.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

HARVEY J. HARVEY  
MAJ, AR or Major, Armor  
Adjutant

**SAMPLE MEMORANDUM**

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
**Headquarters, 4th Battalion, 1st Infantry Training Brigade**  
**Fort Benning, Georgia 31061**

**AFVE-41TB**

**16 November 1990**

**MEMORANDUM FOR Company Commanders**

**SUBJECT: Command Presence During Off-Duty Hours**

1. The recent increase in serious incidents and crimes in the battalion area during nonduty hours convinces me that we need a more visible chain of command.

2. I want each company commander to require an officer or senior noncommissioned officer to walk through the entire company area daily, once between 1800 and 2230 and once between 0200 and 0800. On weekends and nonduty days, he will conduct an additional inspection once between 0900-1700.

3. As a minimum, I expect these personnel to:

a. Verify that the charge of quarters is performing his duties correctly.

b. Inspect all hallways, latrines, and day rooms.

c. Be available to soldiers who want to talk to someone in the chain of command.

d. Note the time of inspection and any remarks on the battalion staff duty officer's log.

4. Begin these daily inspections by 20 November 1990.

**DONALD R. HOUSTON**  
**LTC, Infantry**  
**Commanding**

## MEMORANDUM SIGNATURE BLOCKS

1. From the office of the commander of a unit, headquarters, or installation and signed by the commanding officer:

THOMAS R. TRAVIS  
CPT, Infantry  
Commanding

or

THOMAS R. TRAVIS  
CPT, IN  
Commanding

or

THOMAS R. TRAVIS  
Captain, IN  
Commanding

Written upon commander's direction and signed by an authorized representative regardless of the status of the addressee:

FOR THE COMMANDER:

DALE B. SMOKE  
1LT, Armor  
Adjutant

2. When an officer is writing as an individual on personal matters, show the name, social security number, rank, branch, and organization:

JOSEPH W. BROWN  
123-45-6789  
CPT, Armor  
Co B, 2/34 Armor

Reference: AR 25-50

# MEMORANDUM

## Practical Exercise

**SITUATION:** You are the assistant S1 of the 4th Battalion, 37th Armor at Fort Knox, Kentucky 40121. Your S1 is on leave. Your new battalion commander has been reviewing the battalion's policies, and he sends the following note:

ROUTING AND TRANSMITTAL SLIP		Date
TO: (Name, office symbol, room number, building, Agency/Post)		23/9/88
1. S1		Initials
2.		Date
3.		
4.		
5.		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action S. 25/9/88	File	Note and Return
Approval	For Clearance	Per Conversation:
As Requested	For Correction	Prepare Reply
Circulate	For Your Information	See Me
Comment	Investigate	Signature
Coordination	Justify	

### REMARKS

Write a memorandum for my signature establishing a Commander's Open Door Policy. Word it so it encourages soldiers to use their chain of command to solve problems, but make it clear that I'll see them regardless.

Specify Thursdays, 1730-1830, as "open door" time (when we're in garrison).

The memo should direct the Companies to establish similar policies and to inform soldiers about these policies.

DO NOT use this form as a RECORD of approvals, concurrences, disposals, clearances, and similar actions

FROM: (Name, org. symbol, Agency/Post)

EDWARD D. MARTIN  
LTC, AR

Commanding

Room No.—Bldg.

Phone No.

5041-102

OPTIONAL FORM 41 (Rev. 7-76)  
Prescribed by GSA  
FPMR (41 CFR) 101-11.206

# THE INFORMAL MEMORANDUM

1. **SUMMARY.** The Informal Memorandum replaces the Disposition Form as an informal means of internal communication. We can prepare it three ways: typed, handwritten, or word processed. We can't send it outside Army channels.

2. **USES.** Use the Informal Memorandum:

- a. To originate a staff action.
- b. To obtain comments, coordination, or information upon which to base a reply to a separate paper.
- c. To request routine support from activities on this information.

3. **GUIDELINES.**

- a. Type on plain bond paper in same format as Memorandum.
- b. May be endorsed.

4. **REFERENCE.** AR 25-50.

**SAMPLE INFORMAL MEMORANDUM**

**ABDC-E**

**5 December 1990**

**MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION (Used for 6 or more addressees.)**

**SUBJECT: In-progress Review for AGI**

1. Plan to attend a meeting Monday, 12 December, to review the battalion's progress in preparing for the Annual General Inspection scheduled for March 1991.
2. We will meet from 0900-1030 in the battalion conference room.
3. Bring your AGI briefing books, and be ready to talk about preparations in your area. Keep your briefs to five minutes.
4. POC is Jerry Rock, 4-2222.

**PAUL X. PAULINS**  
**LTC, AR**  
**Commanding**

**DISTRIBUTION:**

**Commander, 5-33 Armor**  
**Executive Officer, 5-33 Armor**  
**S1, S2, S3, S4, BMO, 5-33 Armor**  
**CSM**

## INFORMAL MEMORANDUM

### Practical Exercise

**SITUATION:** The date is 30 June 1989. As Assistant S3 of the 4th Battalion, 1st ITB (Fort Benning, GA 31905), you're setting up Rifle Range #20 for the companies to conduct annual marksmanship training. The training must run from 16 to 18 August 1989, from 0800 to 1600. You read the after-action report from the last annual marksmanship training and note that problems with the target raising mechanisms caused delays of several hours. Each time the OIC had to call range control maintenance, and it took over three hours before they arrived and repaired the targets. This delay occurred four times in three days of firing. To prevent these long delays, you decide to request that range control provide a repairman to be on the range throughout the battalion's firing.

**REQUIREMENT:** Write an Informal Memorandum requesting range maintenance support from range control. Prepare it for the Battalion S3's signature (MAJ Curtis M. Lawson, Infantry). Feel free to "invent" details as necessary to complete this requirement.



# THE MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

1. **SUMMARY.** The Memorandum for Record (MFR) acts as a record for internal reference in a unit to save information not requiring further action.

2. **USES.** Use the MFR:

a. To capture the facts of a situation, conversation, event, etc., for future reference when no other document does that already. (The key here is that the MFR information does not require further action.)

b. To record minutes of meetings or briefings or to note deficiencies in unit administration that we can't correct.

c. To record information on trips.

d. To document conversations or incidents until such time as they can be recorded in the proper format such as counseling statements or letters of reprimand.

e. Don't use the MFR as a transmittal document.

3. **GUIDELINES.**

a. Type or handwrite an MFR.

b. You may attach additional information (as enclosures) to present details, to explain data, or to add to the understanding of a subject.

c. Normally, you will prepare only an original copy of an MFR on white paper.

d. Do not endorse an MFR, but you may have addenda.

4. **REFERENCE.** AR 25-50.

SAMPLE MFR

OFFICE SYMBOL (MARKS NUMBER)

21 October 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: A Company, 2-69 Armor, Unit Safety Council Meeting

1. The Company Safety Council held its quarterly meeting at 1400, 20 October 1988, in the A Company Day Room.

2.

a. Members present:

- (1) 1LT Burke - Chairman.
- (2) 2LT Simpson - Recorder.
- (3) SFC Dillard - Company Safety NCO.
- (4) SSG Hughes - Member.
- (5) SPC Green - Member.

b. Members absent:

1SG Jiminez - Member.

3. Old Business: SFC Dillard noted that the maintenance shop is still unable to keep "dry sweep" on hand to put on oil spills. I said I would personally check in to the shortage of "dry sweep." I then noted that the post engineers approved the work order to replace missing guards on the fluorescent lights in the arms and supply rooms.

4. New Business: SSG Hughes recommended that the company schedule a film on winter driving hazards. Council approved this recommendation and directed SFC Dillard to schedule the film for 2 November 1988. There was no further new business. We tentatively scheduled the next safety council meeting for 20 January 1989 and adjourned the meeting at 1425.

SAMUEL N. SIMPSON  
2LT, ARMOR  
Recorder

ABCD-EF-GH

15 March 1990

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Suspension of Class VI Privileges for SPC James A. Smith,  
123-45-6789

1. As unit commander, I am suspending SPC James A. Smith's Class VI privileges for 6 months from today.
2. SPC Smith's conduct at the Class VI store on 13 March 1990 was unprofessional. His drunkenness, abusive language, and refusal to leave at the manager's request were inappropriate. Although SPC Smith felt he was right to insist that the clerk should have charged him the sale price on a case of beer, he showed poor judgment in handling the situation.
3. At the end of this 6-month suspension, I will evaluate SPC Smith's conduct record to determine if the suspension will end.

THOMAS R. CRANE  
Major, AR  
Commanding

# THE GENERAL COUNSELING FORM

1. **SUMMARY.** The General Counseling Form (DA Form 4856-R) serves to record all types of counseling sessions.

2. **USES.** Use the counseling statement:

a. When a soldier's behavior has been such that continued similar behavior may result in action against him.

b. When a soldier has shown improvement that should be documented.

c. When you conduct routine performance counseling or initial counseling.

3. **GUIDELINES.**

a. Write or type the form, and cover the basic questions (who, what, where, when, how, and why). If you answer these, your counseling record can stand alone.

b. As you write it, ask yourself if it answers these questions:

(1) Does it provide my successor with an accurate record of the person's conduct or performance?

(2) Does it give specific information (dates, names, actual phrases stated, places, and times) that would stand up during legal proceedings?

(3) Could it support punishment of a soldier if he repeats the offense?

(4) Could it support elimination proceedings if necessary?

(5) Is it totally accurate, and does it tell both sides of the story?

c. **Block 8—Date and Circumstances.** Include at least the following information:

(1) Date(s) of the observed performance.

(2) Specific actions, events, or behavior.

## EXAMPLE:

6 Oct 87, Quarterly Performance Counseling. During 4th Qtr FY87, SGT Jones has met or exceeded all performance objectives. He was the battalion's NCO of the Quarter and will compete for Division Artillery NCO of the Quarter in November. He has enrolled in college classes at night and has

encouraged his men to follow his example. He scored 285 on his APFT on 5 Sep. His section earned all first-time GOs on all tasks during the August ARTEP.

d. Block 9--Date and Summary of Counseling. Include at least the following information:

- (1) Reasons for the counseling.
- (2) Key points discussed.
- (3) Possible consequences if any misconduct continues. (If appropriate, discuss the nature and effects of such punishment or separation actions.)
- (4) Corrective actions the soldier should take.
- (5) The soldier's side of the story, if he chooses to state it.

EXAMPLE:

On 28 July, between 1500 and 1600, I counseled SSG Smiley concerning her job performance during the past month. I expressed my appreciation for her hard work on the last field exercise. But I told her she must treat her section members with more respect. I explained that her sarcastic attitude and tendency to curse at them was inappropriate. It could result in formal complaints by them, a reprimand from the commander, or possibly an Article 15.

I asked her for her comments on this. She said she didn't realize she was being so disrespectful. She said she would improve.

Follow-up: I told her I'd give her more feedback next week on her progress.

4. REFERENCES.

- a. AR 350-21, Instruction on the Benefits of an Honorable Discharge.
- b. AR 635-200, Enlisted Personnel.

**GENERAL COUNSELING FORM**

For use of this form, see AR 635-200; the proponent agency is MILPERCEN

**DATA REQUIRED BY THE PRIVACY ACT OF 1974**

**AUTHORITY:** 5 USC 301, 10 USC 3012(G). **PRINCIPAL PURPOSE:** To record counseling data pertaining to service members.  
**ROUTINE USES:** Prerequisite counseling under paragraphs 5-8, 5-13, chapters 11, 13 or section III, chapter 14, AR 635-200. May also be used to document failures of rehabilitation efforts in administrative discharge proceedings.  
**DISCLOSURE:** Disclosure is voluntary, but failure to provide the information may result in recording of a negative counseling session indicative of the subordinate's lack of a desire to solve his or her problems.

**PART I - BASIC DATA**

1. NAME (last, first, MI) Lang, Leslie R.	2. SOCIAL SECURITY NO. 111-22-3333	3. GRADE E6	4. SEX Male
5. UNIT C Co, 5th Bn, 33d AR, Ft Knox, KY 40121	FOR TRAINING UNITS ONLY		
	6. WEEK OF TRAINING	7. TRAINING SCORES HIGH _____ MED _____ LOW _____	

**PART II - OBSERVATIONS****8. DATE AND CIRCUMSTANCES**

First state what happened; begin with the date and time, then "I observed," "I heard," or "I saw." Then explain the details of when, how, who, where, etc. You must be specific, clear, and concise. Put the words in a language your soldiers will understand.

**9. DATE AND SUMMARY OF COUNSELING**

First, state the date, then that you counseled the soldier about \_\_\_\_\_. State what happened as a result. What was the soldier's response or attitude? Be specific. Put any pertinent background information you feel necessary next. You may include any reasons the soldier gave you for his or her actions. What real or possible corrective action did you mention? Warnings?

Include any time limits on suspensions, restrictions, or observation periods.

**DISPOSITION INSTRUCTIONS**

This form will be destroyed upon: reassignment (other than rehabilitative transfers), separation at ETS, or upon retirement.

**PART III - AUTHENTICATION**

10. NAME, GRADE, SIGNATURE OF COUNSELOR

GREY, THOMAS A., LTC

DATE

10 Feb 87

11. I acknowledge having been counseled by the above individual and understand the reason for this counseling session. I concur/nonconcur that the information above accurately reflects this counseling session. I nonconcur for the following reasons:

Allow the soldier to refute your comments or state anything here he or she desires.

12. NAME, GRADE, SIGNATURE OF INDIVIDUAL COUNSELED

LANG, LESLIE R., SSG

DATE

10 Feb 87

13. IF COUNSELED INDIVIDUAL REFUSES TO SIGN COUNSELING NOTES, COUNSELOR WILL INITIAL THIS BLOCK.

**PART IV - REHABILITATION**

14. REHABILITATION RESULTS/COMMENTS

After observation period, state current impression of soldier and his performance. Include your final action, if any.

15. NAME, GRADE, SIGNATURE OF INDIVIDUAL COUNSELED

LANG, LESLIE R., SSG

DATE

11 May 87

16. NAME, GRADE, SIGNATURE OF COUNSELOR

GREY, THOMAS A., LTC

DATE

11 May 87

**PART V - UNIT COMMANDER INTERVIEW**

17. INTERVIEW RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATION

If the soldier must see the commander, comments from the interview go here. He must first state what final action he will take against the soldier or the end result of the counseling session, then add any pertinent information necessary from the counseling.

18. NAME, GRADE, SIGNATURE OF UNIT COMMANDER

JONES, RALPH O., COL

DATE

15 May 87

## COUNSELING STATEMENT

### Practical Exercise

#### SITUATION:

1. LOCATION: Training Area C.
2. DATE: 1 July 1988, 1430.
3. PERSONS INVOLVED: 2LT Jones, SSG Smith, SPC Rogers.
4. BACKGROUND: You are evaluating a patrol that the NCOs of your unit are conducting. The squad you are observing is clearly lost, and the men are getting fatigued and frustrated. SPC Rogers starts loudly complaining about the weight of his pack and the competency of SSG Smith. After Rogers swears at SSG Smith, Smith pushes and threatens him.

Smith and Rogers are in 3d Plt, Co A, 1st Bn, 25th AR. The platoon is having problems with discipline and morale. At the same time, SSG Smith is basically a good NCO.

**REQUIREMENT:** Using the above situation and information, complete blocks 8 and 9 on the modified counseling form and counsel either SSG Smith or SPC Rogers. Invent details as necessary.



# THE REPORT OF SURVEY

1. **SUMMARY.** Whenever government property is lost, damaged, or destroyed, the accountable officer must designate someone to conduct a Report of Survey.

2. **USES.** Use the Report of Survey:

a. To determine who (if anyone) is responsible for damage, loss, or destruction of Government property.

b. To determine the amount the liable person(s) must pay to the Government.

3. **GUIDELINES.**

a. The findings and recommendations (Block 26, DA Form 4697) narrative should:

(1) Follow standards described in FM 10-14-3 and AR 735-11.

(2) Show recommendations that follow logically from the facts in the evidence and findings.

(3) Contain evidence that supports the findings.

(4) Be complete enough so that reviewers can see responsibility in the case without sending the report back to you for more information.

b. You must--

(1) Complete the preprinted sentence in Block 26 with a clear, concise summary of your findings.

(2) Use short, concise sentences that are gramatically correct and that include correct punctuation, spelling, and word usage.

(3) Not include substantiated opinions or phrases like "lost or damaged in manner stated."

(4) Indicate how any item was (should be) disposed of, if appropriate.

4. **REFERENCES.**

a. FM 10-14-3.

b. DA Form 4697.

c. AR 735-11.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY REPORT OF SURVEY		1. DATE PREPARED	2. SURVEY NUMBER	
For use of this form, see AR 735-11; the proponent agency is DCSLOG.		1 September 1987		
3. TYPE OF PROPERTY Organizational		4. ADDRESS OF ACCOUNTABLE OFFICER DMMC, 10th Inf Div, Fort Blank, TX 78234    UIC: WARVAA		
5. ORIGINATOR (Accountable officer, or primary hand receipt holder) Phillip B. Murphy, CPT, Commanding, Co A, 307th Sig Bn    UIC: WARBA				
6. NATIONAL STOCK NUMBER	7. ITEM DESCRIPTION	8. QTY	9. UNIT PRICE	
10. TOTAL COST				
1. 6650-00-530-0974 (B67218)	Binoculars, 7X50, Mil Reticle, M17A1, SN: 24567	1 ea	\$350.00	\$350.00
2. 5180-00-672-2611 (W38897)	Tool Kit, General Mechanics, Light Weight			
Component Loss				
5110-00-241-9148	File, Hand	1 ea	1.80	1.80
5120-00-0618541	Hammer, Hand	1 ea	6.75	6.75
5120-00-240-5328	Wrench, Adjustable	1 ea	3.60	<u>3.60</u>
Grand Total				\$362.15
11. DATE AND CIRCUMSTANCES On 15 August 1987 I, CPT Phillip B. Murphy, 228-13-4444, Commander, and my replacement, CPT George C. Piercy, 215-54-2945, took a joint inventory, and the above items were missing. I could not find the items during a complete search of the area. I do recall seeing the binoculars during the monthly inventory on 7 July 1987. I had just returned them to the company safe from my quarters where I was using them to spot birds. They were usually stored in a locked container in the company orderly room. I had a key to the container, and a second key was in the company key box which the company first sergeant, 1SG Ronald Campbell, 377-18-5050, or the company CQ controlled (Exhibit A). I inventoried the tool kit when I took command 2 years ago. I did not inventory it again because it was excess to the unit, and I stored it under my desk.  <div style="text-align: center;">Exhibit A</div>				
12. AFFIDAVIT  I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that (to the best of my knowledge and belief) the articles of public property shown above and/or on attached sheets were lost, destroyed, damaged, or worn out in the manner stated, while in the public service.		13. Subscribed and sworn to (or affirmed) before me at Fort Blank, TX this 11 day of September 1987  TYPED NAME, GRADE, AND SSN PHILLIP B. MURPHY, CPT, SC 228-13-4444  NAME AND GRADE (type and sign) Walter C. Bagwell, CPT, Adj		
14. DATE 12 September 1987	15. NAME, GRADE, AND SIGNATURE OF ACCOUNTABLE OFFICER DONALD M. JONES, CW4, USA		16. DOCUMENT NUMBER WTKA5-0021-0025	
17. APPOINTING AUTHORITY  I have received the evidence pertaining to the lost, damaged, or destroyed property, and have determined that the following action is required. a. <input type="checkbox"/> No further investigation is required. There is no positive evidence of negligence. I do not suspect willful misconduct, or deliberate unauthorized use. I hereby forward this document to the approving authority for final action. (Proceed to block 37.) b. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The circumstances surrounding the lost, damaged or destruction warrants further investigation. (Proceed to block 21.) c. <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct an investigation according to AR 15-6. Attach this document, as an exhibit, to the investigation and forward it to the approving authority.				
18. DATE 25 September 1987	19. TYPED NAME, GRADE, AND TITLE OF APPOINTING AUTHORITY LEROY J. WEATHERLY, LTC, SC Commander, 2d Sig Bn		20. SIGNATURE	

DA FORM 4697  
SEP 81

DA FORM 4696 (TEST), 1 JUL 78 and DA FORM 4697 (TEST),  
1 JUL 78 ARE OBSOLETE

21. APPOINTING AUTHORITY HQ, 307th Signal Battalion		22. STATION Fort Blank, Texas		23. DATE 3 October 1987	
24. NAME, GRADE OF SURVEYING OFFICER Robert A. Smith, CPT					
25. YOU ARE APPOINTED SURVEYING OFFICER BY ORDER OF: <u>Leroy T. Weatherly, LTC</u> <span style="float: right; font-size: small;">(Typed name, grade of Appointing Authority)</span>					
<b>26. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION</b>  <p>I have examined all available evidence as shown in exhibits <u>A</u> to <u>E</u> and as indicated below have personally investigated the same and it is my belief that the article(s) listed hereon and/or attached to sheets, total cost \$362.15 were the responsibility of CPT Phillip B. Murphy, 228-13-4444. He did not properly secure the items. According to 1SG Ronald Campbell, 377-18-5050 (Exhibit B), CPT Murphy used the items for personal purposes, compromised the security of the items, and degraded the unit's key control system. SGT John M. McMullen, 322-74-1234, certified (Exhibit C) that he was unable to convince CPT Murphy to allow him to secure the toolkit or turn it in as excess. The unit clerk, SP4 David Jones, 415-64-4897, certified (Exhibit D) that CPT Murphy often returned the missing binoculars and simply laid them on the safe instead of securing them. The items were depreciated according to paragraph 4-19, AR 735-11. The actual loss to the Government is \$325.93 (Exhibit E).</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION: That the Army hold CPT Phillip B. Murphy, 228-13-4444, liable in the amount of \$325.93 and relieve all others from property accountability and responsibility for the missing items. CPT Murphy's monthly base pay at the time of the loss was \$1,514.70.</p>					
27. RECOMMEND PECUNIARY CHARGE		a. ACTUAL LOSS \$325.93		b. AMOUNT CHARGED \$325.93	
c. LOSS TO GOVERNMENT 0					
28. DATE 15 October 1987		29a. TYPED NAME, GRADE OF SURVEYING OFFICER Robert A. Smith, CPT		b. SIGNATURE	
30. I have examined the findings and recommendations of the Surveying Officer on this report of survey and the exhibits <u>A</u> to <u>E</u> and <input type="checkbox"/> desire to make a statement which is attached hereto; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> do not desire to make a statement. I am aware of my right to legal advice in preparing the statement and, if a pecuniary charge is finally approved, to make appeal and (if an enlisted man) my right to request remission of indebtedness. I am/am not the accountable officer for the lost or damaged property. The property was/was not my personal arms or equipment.					
31. DATE 16 October 1987		32a. TYPED NAME, GRADE OF INDIVIDUAL BEING CHARGED Phillip B. Murphy, CPT		b. SIGNATURE	
33. RECOMMENDATION BY THE APPOINTING AUTHORITY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONCUR  <input type="checkbox"/> NONCONCUR		34. COMMENTS Due to the potential financial hardship on CPT Murphy, I recommend that the charges be prorated over a 3-month period.			
35. DATE 18 October 1987		36a. TYPED NAME, GRADE & TITLE OF APPOINTING AUTH Leroy T. Weatherly, LTC Commander, 307th Sig Bn		b. SIGNATURE	
37. APPROVING AUTHORITY a. <input type="checkbox"/> REJECTED. Investigation is required. Appoint a survey officer. Date _____ Initials _____ b. <input type="checkbox"/> REJECTED. Investigation incomplete. Additional information required. Date _____ Initials _____ c. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> APPROVED BY AUTHORITY OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY.  I hold CPT Phillip B. Murphy, 228-13-4444, liable in the amount of \$325.93. I have discontinued accountability. CPT Murphy's monthly basic pay at the time of loss was \$1,514.70. I recommend that we prorate the charges over a 3-month period.					38. PECUNIARY CHARGE  a. ACTUAL LOSS \$325.93  b. AMOUNT CHARGED \$325.93  c. LOSS TO GOVERNMENT
39. DATE 25 October 1987		40a. TYPED NAME, GRADE & TITLE OF APPROVING AUTH John H. Johnson, COL Commander, 2d Sig Bde		b. SIGNATURE	

**REPORT OF SURVEY**  
**Practical Exercise**

**SITUATION:**

By 1700, 6 June 1985, all three squads of 1st Platoon, B Company, 1-59 Infantry had completed the ARTEP task "Squad Forced March Live Fire" at the Audie Murphy range complex. The platoon trucked back to the company area for the evening meal. When the platoon arrived, people were already eating dinner. 1SG Clayton Farlow told SSG Ross to get his platoon fed ASAP.

The platoon moved to the platoon area and stacked arms. SSG Ross tasked PFC Mark Grayson, the platoon RTO, with guarding the platoon's weapons and equipment. Grayson complained about missing supper, but not excessively. Grayson took off his radio and placed it against the right rear fender of the M113A2 B-12 and lay down on the track's lower ramp. Thirty minutes later PV2 Ray Crebbs relieved Grayson on SSG Ross' orders. Crebbs remained on guard until the rest of the platoon returned, and SSG Ross relieved him.

At 1845, SSG Ross told the platoon to clean their weapons and prepare for the next day's live fire exercise. At 1900, SSG Ross personally received two calls on the AN/PRC-77 in question: 1) There would be a meeting of all platoon leaders and platoon sergeants at the company CP at 1930. 2) There would be a meeting of all RTOs with the company commo NCO in the company trains at 1930.

SSG Ross told Grayson about the meeting, and they both left for their respective meetings around 1910. SSG Ross detailed nobody for radio watch when he left. During the meeting at the CP, the company XO told Ross that his platoon would refuel at 2200. Ross returned to his platoon at 2100 and called a meeting of his squad leaders to discuss the next day's operation. He also told them that the tracks would leave for the refueling point at 2130. The meeting ended at 2120.

At 2130, SGT Blake Carrington ran up and told SSG Ross that B-12's assigned driver still had not returned from the 1SG's KP detail. SSG Ross told PV2 Bobby Ewing to drive B-12. Ewing started the track, and SSG Ross acted as his ground guide. Ross signaled Ewing to back up, and he did, running over the AN/PRC-77 radio and crushing it.

**REQUIREMENT:**

You are a platoon leader in A Company, 1st Battalion, 59th Infantry and have been assigned the attached Report of Survey on the destruction of an AN/PRC-77 radio. You have completed your investigation and are now ready to write your findings and make a recommendation.

For use of this form, see AR 190-30; the proponent agency is Office of The Provost Marshal General.

I, John Ross, WANT TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT UNDER OATH:

XX  
XXX-END OF STATEMENT-XX

**ADDITIONAL PAGES MUST CONTAIN THE HEADING "STATEMENT OF \_\_\_\_\_ TAKEN AT \_\_\_\_\_ DATED \_\_\_\_\_ CONTINUED." THE BOTTOM OF EACH ADDITIONAL PAGE MUST BEAR THE INITIALS OF THE PERSON MAKING THE STATEMENT AND BE INITIALED AS "PAGE \_\_\_\_\_ OF \_\_\_\_\_ PAGES." WHEN ADDITIONAL PAGES ARE UTILIZED, THE BACK OF PAGE 1 WILL BE LINED OUT, AND THE STATEMENT WILL BE CONCLUDED ON THE REVERSE SIDE OF ANOTHER COPY OF THIS FORM.**

For use of this form, see AR 190-30: the proponent agency is Office of The Provost Marshal General.

For use of this form, see AR 190-30: the proponent agency is Office of The Provost Marshal General.

**ORGANIZATION OR ADDRESS**

**B Company, 1st Battalion, 59th Infantry, 9th Armored Division**

[illegible]

ADDITIONAL PAGES MUST CONTAIN THE HEADING "STATEMENT OF \_\_\_\_\_ TAKEN AT \_\_\_\_\_ DATED \_\_\_\_\_ CONTINUED." THE BOTTOM OF EACH ADDITIONAL PAGE MUST BEAR THE INITIALS OF THE PERSON MAKING THE STATEMENT AND BE INITIALED AS "PAGE \_\_\_\_\_ OF \_\_\_\_\_ PAGES." WHEN ADDITIONAL PAGES ARE UTILIZED, THE BACK OF PAGE 1 WILL BE LINED OUT, AND THE STATEMENT WILL BE CONCLUDED ON THE REVERSE SIDE OF ANOTHER COPY OF THIS FORM.

For use of this form, see AR 190-30; the proponent agency is Office of The Provost Marshal General.

DA FORM 2823  
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**For use of this form, see AR 190-30; the proponent agency is Office of The Provost Marshal General.**

i. Raymond E. Crebbs , WANT TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT UNDER OATH:

I was standing in the chow line when SSG ROSS came up and started hassling me. He said that because I had screwed up on the range, I had to stand guard after I ate. I finished eating and went over to the platoon area and told PFC GRAYSON to go eat. I watched the platoon's equipment until the platoon returned. SSG ROSS told me to clean my rifle, and I did. The radio was next to the track when SSG ROSS relieved me. The next time I saw the radio was after it had been smashed by the track. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX-END OF STATEMENT-XX

ADDITIONAL PAGES MUST CONTAIN THE HEADING "STATEMENT OF            TAKEN AT            DATED            CONTINUED." THE BOTTOM OF EACH ADDITIONAL PAGE MUST BEAR THE INITIALS OF THE PERSON MAKING THE STATEMENT AND BE INITIALED AS "PAGE        OF        PAGES." WHEN ADDITIONAL PAGES ARE UTILIZED, THE BACK OF PAGE 1 WILL BE LINED OUT, AND THE STATEMENT WILL BE CONCLUDED ON THE REVERSE SIDE OF ANOTHER COPY OF THIS FORM.



<b>DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY</b> <b>REPORT OF SURVEY</b> <small>For use of this form, see AR 735-11; the proponent agency is DCSLOG.</small>		<b>1. DATE PREPARED</b> 10 June 1990	<b>2. SURVEY NUMBER</b> 75-90
<b>3. TYPE OF PROPERTY</b> Organizational		<b>4. ADDRESS OF ACCOUNTABLE OFFICER</b> DMMC, 9th Armored Division, Fort Hood, TX 76511	
<b>5. ORIGINATOR (Accountable officer, or primary hand receipt holder)</b> Philip B. Murphy, CPT, Commanding, Co B, 1st Bn, 59th Infantry			
<b>6. NATIONAL STOCK NUMBER</b> 6650-00-241-8539	<b>7. ITEM DESCRIPTION</b> Radio AN/PRC-77, SN: 34572	<b>8. QTY</b> 1 ea	<b>9. UNIT PRICE</b> \$957.00
			<b>10. TOTAL COST</b> \$957.00
<b>11. DATE AND CIRCUMSTANCES</b> On 6 June 1990, the above listed AN/PRC-77 radio was destroyed when an M113A2 driven by PVT Bobby Joe Ewing, 354-67-8712, ran over it. At the time of the accident SSG John Ross, 145-97-0698, was acting as Ewing's ground guide. The 799th Maintenance Battalion conducted a technical inspection of the radio on 8 June 1990. Based on their inspection, 799th Maintenance Battalion determined that they cannot repair the radio.			
<b>12. AFFIDAVIT</b> <small>I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that (to the best of my knowledge and belief) the articles of public property shown above and/or on attached sheets were lost, destroyed, damaged, or worn out in the manner stated, while in the public service.</small>		<b>SIGNATURE AND DATE</b> TYPED NAME, GRADE, AND SSN Philip B. Murphy, CPT, IN 228-13-4441	
		<b>13. Subscribed and sworn to (or affirmed)</b> before me at Fort Hood, TX 76511 this 10 day of June 1990 NAME AND GRADE (type and sign) Joe Bagwell, CPT, Adj	
<b>14. DATE</b> 10 June 1990	<b>15. NAME, GRADE, AND SIGNATURE OF ACCOUNTABLE OFFICER</b> Walter W. Smith, CW3, USA		<b>16. DOCUMENT NUMBER</b> WT4Ka5-0121
<b>17. APPOINTING AUTHORITY</b> I have received the evidence pertaining to the lost, damaged, or destroyed property, and have determined that the following action is required. a. <input type="checkbox"/> No further investigation is required. There is no positive evidence of negligence. I do not suspect willful misconduct, or deliberate unauthorized use. I hereby forward this document to the approving authority for final action. (Proceed to block 37.) b. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The circumstances surrounding the lost, damaged or destruction warrants further investigation. (Proceed to block 21.) c. <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct an investigation according to AR 15-6. Attach this document, as an exhibit, to the investigation and forward it to the approving authority.			
<b>18. DATE</b> 11 June 1990	<b>19. TYPED NAME, GRADE, AND TITLE OF APPOINTING AUTHORITY</b> Leroy J. Weathers, LTC, IN		<b>20. SIGNATURE</b>

21. APPOINTING AUTHORITY HQ 1st Bn 59th Infantry		22. STATION Fort Hood, Texas 76511		23. DATE 10 June 1990	
24. NAME, GRADE OF SURVEYING OFFICER					
25. YOU ARE APPOINTED SURVEYING OFFICER BY ORDER OF: <u>LTC Leroy J. Weathers</u> <small>(Typed name, grade of Appointing Authority)</small>					
26. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION  I have examined all available evidence as shown in exhibits _____ to _____ and as indicated below have personally investigated the same and it is my belief that the article(s) listed hereon and/or attached to sheets, total cost \$ _____					
27. RECOMMEND PECUNIARY CHARGE		a. ACTUAL LOSS		b. AMOUNT CHARGED	
c. LOSS TO GOVERNMENT					
28. DATE		29a. TYPED NAME, GRADE OF SURVEYING OFFICER			b. SIGNATURE
30. I have examined the findings and recommendations of the Surveying Officer on this report of survey and the exhibits _____ to _____ and <input type="checkbox"/> desire to make a statement which is attached hereto; <input type="checkbox"/> do not desire to make a statement. I am aware of my right to legal advice in preparing the statement and, if a pecuniary charge is finally approved, to make appeal and (If an enlisted man) my right to request remission of indebtedness. I am/am not the accountable officer for the lost or damaged property. The property was/was not my personal arms or equipment.					
31. DATE		32a. TYPED NAME, GRADE OF INDIVIDUAL BEING CHARGED			b. SIGNATURE
33. RECOMMENDATION BY THE APPOINTING AUTHORITY <input type="checkbox"/> CONCUR  <input type="checkbox"/> NONCONCUR		34. COMMENTS			
35. DATE		36a. TYPED NAME, GRADE & TITLE OF APPOINTING AUTH			b. SIGNATURE
37. APPROVING AUTHORITY a. <input type="checkbox"/> REJECTED: Investigation is required. Appoint a survey officer. Date _____ Initials _____ b. <input type="checkbox"/> REJECTED: Investigation incomplete. Additional information required. Date _____ Initials _____ c. <input type="checkbox"/> APPROVED BY AUTHORITY OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY.					38. PECUNIARY CHARGE  a. ACTUAL LOSS  b. AMOUNT CHARGED  c. LOSS TO GOVERNMENT
39. DATE		40a. TYPED NAME, GRADE & TITLE OF APPROVING AUTH			b. SIGNATURE

## Section III

## SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE SURVEYING OFFICER

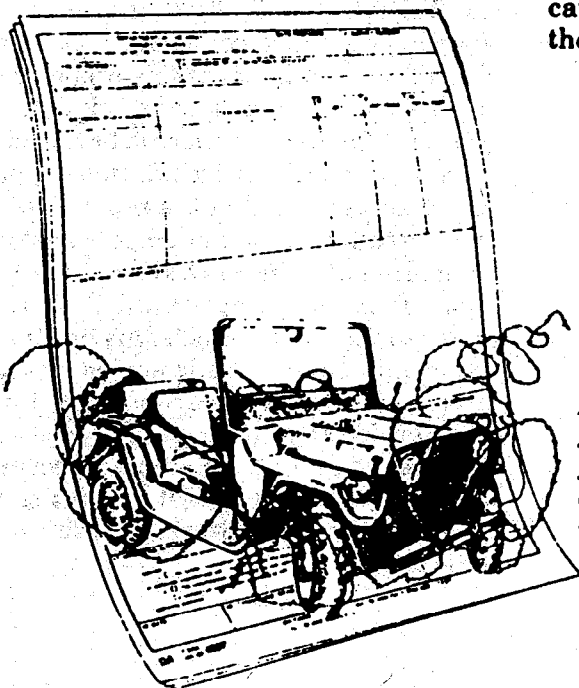
## 23. What Do You Consider When You Survey An Incident?

As surveying officer, you are trying to decide whether a person's actions were the prime cause of loss or damage to Government property. In this capacity, you must be scrupulously fair to the person and to the Government. Consider the following before you make your decision.

■ **The Degree of Care and Resourcefulness That Can Be Reasonably Expected.** Weigh the actions of the person involved against those of the average prudent person. A prudent person is one who is cautious, circumspect, and discreet. However, to be fair, you should keep in mind the person's age, experience, and special qualifications to do a job. The following cases help illustrate these points.

□ PVT Henry, a nondriver, was being given driver training. His instructor told him to back up a truck. With the confusion of a learner, PVT Henry shifted into third gear. The truck leaped forward and struck a tree. In this case, you should consider his lack of experience.

□ Eighteen-year-old PVT Doe was a member of the Aggressor forces in a practical military exercise. While he was trying to avoid being captured by the enemy, he found a jeep that was not being used. He jumped in the jeep and started to drive off. LT Hunter, to whom the jeep was issued, shouted at him to come back with his jeep. PVT Doe, continuing to flee the enemy in the exercise, drove off at great speed. He came to a halt only when the jeep became entangled in barbed wire and



was damaged. His commanding officer and platoon leader both testified that he was caught up in his Aggressor role and that he was totally intent on accomplishing his mission. In this case, you should consider PVT Doe's age, lack of experience, and limited intellectual ability. You could relieve him of responsibility if you felt these elements warranted it.

■ **The Responsibility of the Person for the Property (Personal or Non-personal).** When a person holds property like personal arms, binoculars, or hand-tools that have been issued to him for his own use, he has personal responsibility. When he converts property to his own use without permission or authority, as when he steals a vehicle, a person has personal responsibility. When a person commands or supervises others who use property or have custody of property, he has non-personal (either command or supervisory) responsibility. If there was nonpersonal responsibility, the following elements can affect your decision.

☐ The nature of the property.

☐ The nature, extent, and complexity of the organization or activity that was supervised. How feasible was it to keep close supervision over the property? You should check the factors that contributed to the loss or damage. In one case, a company commander and his slated successor took a joint inventory just before he left. At the last moment, orders were changed and the slated successor went to another unit. A new commanding officer (CO) took command. There was no opportunity to take a joint inventory at that time. After 2 months, he took inventory and discovered shortages. The former CO and the officer who took

the first inventory both claimed that no shortages had been evident. When the surveying officer made his decision, he held that the lapse of time and the mandatory physical departure of the old commanding officer were mitigating circumstances and recommended relieving the new CO from responsibility. In this case, an approving authority would probably not follow the recommendation of the surveying officer. The new CO should have taken inventory immediately, even though he couldn't take it with the old CO. The approving authority would probably decide to hold him responsible for the shortages.

☐ The adequacy of the measures set up for supervision of subordinates to insure protection of the property.

☐ The extent to which supervision by a commander may have been hampered by other pressing duties or by a lack of qualified assistants.

■ **The Possibility of Fraud, Collusion, or Willful Misconduct.** If there is any suspicion of fraud, collusion, or other willful misconduct incident to a property loss on the part of a military or civilian employee of the Army, you must be especially careful to make a thorough investigation of the facts. Fraud is the misrepresentation of truth to induce another to part with something of value or to surrender a legal right. It is also a deceitful act with the intent to deprive another of his rights or to cause him injury. Collusion is a secret agreement and cooperation for a fraudulent or deceitful purpose. You must not recommend relief from property responsibility or pecuniary liability until the persons are completely cleared of suspicion of these crimes.

## 24. What Evidence Do You Consider For Sensitive Items?

Sensitive items must be stored in special storage facilities. Only authorized personnel should have keys. A lock combination must be known only to a minimum number of people. In dealing with cases on these items, you may have to ask the following questions.

- What security measures were taken?
- Were key control procedures adequate?
- Were health and welfare inspections conducted?
- What action was taken to recover the items?
- Were appropriate notices published in the daily bulletin?
- Was the loss properly reported to the Criminal Investigation Division (CID)?

## 25. What Evidence Do You Look At In Vehicle Cases?

You should examine several categories of evidence when the Report of Survey involves a vehicle accident. Consider the following.

- **Type of Road.** You should, if possible, examine the site of the accident. You should look at the type of road on which the accident took place. Is it macadam, asphalt, cobblestones, or dirt?
- **Weather and Visibility.** At the time of the accident, was it sunny and bright or foggy, snowy, or rainy? Did it happen at night? How good was the visibility at the time?
- **Speed.** How fast was the person driving at the time of the accident? Before the accident? Did he suddenly speed up? Did he obey traffic signals and traffic laws?
- **Statements.** Do you have statements of the driver of the vehicle being surveyed, of the driver of the other vehicle involved, and of witnesses? These are important. You will probably have to interview people

yourself to get all the facts.

- **Accident Report.** Has DA Form 3946 (Military Police Traffic Accident Report) been included in the file? Has an accident report of a civilian policeman been included?
- **Driver's Qualifications.** Has DA Form 348 (Equipment Operator's Qualification Record (Except Aircraft)) been included in the file?
- **Pictures.** Have pictures been used to show damage? If so, has the damage been explained? You may have to take pictures yourself or have them taken. Have you looked at the vehicle yourself? You must do that before you release it for repair or turn-in. Remember, you must send a release for the vehicle to the property book office as soon as possible.
- **Cost of Damages.** Has the actual cost of damage been included? If not, have you requested it or an estimate of the damage?

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**26. What Points May Be Important In A Survey Involving A Convoy?**

---

If you survey damage to a vehicle that was part of a convoy, you must consider certain points of information. What interval did the convoy commander prescribe before departure? What was the interval kept by the driver just before or at the time of the accident? Did the convoy furnish special instructions before crossing the initial point?

■ In one case a van truck, part of a convoy, incurred damage to its roof while passing through a narrow archway. A question arose as to whether the driver was negligent because he did not check the height of the vehicle in relation to that of the archway before he drove through. Evidence showed that the convoy commander had prescribed a convoy interval of 100 yards for all vehicles. The same convoy interval was to be maintained at all halts.

■ The convoy commander stopped his lead vehicle to check whether the larger trucks would be able to pass under the archway. At the halt, a 2 1/2-ton truck just ahead of the respondent's truck in the convoy stopped 20 yards on the other side of the archway. Could you, the surveying officer, hold the driver of the van truck liable for the damage to the roof of his truck? Yes. When the 2 1/2-ton truck stopped, the driver of the van truck should not have attempted to pass through the archway. He should have stopped about 80 yards back of the archway because the prescribed convoy interval was 100 yards, even at halts. He was negligent in that he did not follow the instructions of the convoy commander to maintain a 100-yard convoy interval at all times, including halts.

---

## 27. What Evidence Do You Look At In A Survey For A Loss Of Communications Wire?

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### Relative percentage of loss.

In a survey involving the loss of communications wire, you should look carefully at the Modification Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE) allowance of wire and the length of wire laid. The second piece of information is important because you must consider the relative percentage of loss. If 100 miles of wire were laid and just 300 feet were lost, no negligence may be involved. However, if 20 miles were extended and 18 miles of the wire were lost, then it seems obvious that negligence or even theft was involved unless further evidence shows fully why the loss occurred. You should also check to find out whether precautionary measures were set up to safeguard the wire.

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## 28. What Points Do You Check For Losses That Show Up On An Inventory?

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You must consider the circumstances and facts that are special in each case you survey. When you survey the loss of items that have shown up on an inventory, you should look at some questions that involve accounting procedures and also the procedures used in the inventory.

- Were the property accounts maintained according to the procedures in AR 710-2?
- Were proper hand receipt procedures used? Were individuals required to properly receipt for issued items?
- Did the user have a secure storage area?
- Was adequate supervision maintained over the unit supply room?
- If proper procedures were not followed, did the supply officer take measures to correct the situation? What steps did he take?

## 29. What Standards Do You Use To Rule That Negligence Or Misconduct Is Involved?

To recommend pecuniary liability, you do not have to feel certain beyond the shadow of a doubt that negligence or misconduct occurred. However, you should feel that most of the evidence supports your decision. You can charge the person for loss of the property if you feel his negligence or misconduct was the proximate cause of loss. To make such a determination you must understand specifically what is meant by the terms "negligence" and "willful misconduct."

■ **Negligence.** Negligence is an act or omission that a reasonable, prudent person would not commit under similar circumstances. A reasonable man is not perfect and may well not do what you would. If a person being investigated happens to have an IQ of 140, the question is not what the reasonable man with an IQ of 140 would have done but rather what the reasonable man with a normal IQ would have done. You should judge him as a man of normal intelligence, perception, and memory. This is a minimum standard of conduct test. If the person involved possesses specific knowledge or skills, e.g., if he is a tank driver, then the test would compare him to the reasonable tank driver with a normal IQ under similar circumstances. In each of the following cases, a reasonable, prudent person with a normal IQ could foresee that a problem could result from his action. When he did not exercise the care required by the circumstances, he was negligent.

☐ A soldier drove a vehicle at speed excessive for road and weather conditions.

☐ A man leaned his weapon against the open ramp of an armored personnel carrier. Someone closed the ramp, and the weapon was damaged.

☐ A driver was carrying a large air compressor in his truck. He failed to check the lashings before leaving. As he rounded a curve, the item slid off the truck and was damaged.

☐ Another driver backed up a vehicle but failed to use a "ground guide" to clear his exit. The vehicle was damaged.

■ **Willful Misconduct.** Willful misconduct is an *intentionally wrongful or unlawful act*. It is either a willful act or a willful failure to do something that is required by law, regulation, or prudence. Misappropriation and theft both fall under this category. The misappropriation with which you will be concerned is the use of a Government vehicle or other Government property for unauthorized personal use. Theft is self-explanatory.

■ **Difference Between Offenses.** What is the difference between negligence and willful misconduct? To find negligence you do not have to find evidence of intent, but for willful misconduct, you do have to find evidence of intent. That is, it must be a deliberate act.



### 30. What Is Proximate Cause?

#### How Does Proximate Cause Affect Individual Liability?

A determination that a person is negligent or has committed an act of willful misconduct is not sufficient cause to hold him pecuniarily liable; the evidence must indicate that the misconduct or negligence was the *proximate* cause of the loss, damage, or destruction. What is "proximate" cause? The term is defined in paragraph 1-6a of AR 735-11 as the cause that, in a natural and continuous sequence, *unbroken by a new cause*, produces the loss or damage, and without which the loss or damage would not have occurred. Stated more simply, proximate cause means the *immediate* or direct cause.

■ **Examples of Proximate Cause.** Perhaps it would be better to explain the term by giving a few examples.

□ A truckdriver drove a truck at an excessive speed beyond the posted speed limit. He hit the rear of a vehicle in front of him. In this case the proximate cause of the accident was clearly the driver's excessive speed. The accident would not have happened if he had not been driving too fast. Suppose the other vehicle was coming the wrong way on a one-way street. You could hold both drivers pecuniarily liable, if you feel they contributed equally to the accident. You could reason there was concurrent negligence. That arises when the accident is caused by concurrent wrongful acts of two or more persons acting independently.

□ In another case driver A drove at the posted speed limit. Driver B came out of a side street that did not give him the right of way and hit A's vehicle. In this case the proximate cause was the negligence of driver B.

■ **Judgment as a Factor.** Common sense and good judgment should always be used in determining proximate cause. Although the speed limit in a particular place may be 30 miles an hour, a person cannot always drive at that speed in that place without fear of negligence. The street at a particular time may be so crowded or so icy that even 20 miles an hour is a reckless and excessive rate of speed.

■ **Recognition of Proximate Cause.** Sometimes you have to look long and hard at the facts. At times what appears to be the proximate cause may not be.

□ SGT Jones was on permanent duty as Sergeant of the Guard. Because of a shortage of experienced drivers, the guard vehicle was assigned directly to him, and he was told to drive the vehicle himself. However, SGT Jones allowed the privates of the guard to act as their own drivers when going to and from their guard posts. One of the privates was involved in an accident. Investigation showed that the private was operating the vehicle in a safe and careful manner at the time of the accident. However, icy road conditions and snow-

filled tire ruts caused the vehicle to turn over. The surveying officer held the Sergeant of the Guard liable for the reason that only he was authorized to drive the guard vehicle, although he stated in his findings that no negligence existed on the part of the driver. Since the accident was not caused by negligence on the part of the driver and since he was an experienced, licensed driver, it must be assumed that, under the same given set of circumstances, the accident would have occurred no matter who was driving. Therefore, the proximate cause of the accident was not SGT Jones' negligence in permitting an unauthorized driver to use the vehicle, but the existing road conditions. SGT Jones' negligence in permitting the privates of the guard to take the vehicle to their guard post might have left him open to administrative reprimand. The Report of Survey, however, would not be the proper instrument to use in this case. His commander could give him an oral reprimand, a formal letter of reprimand, or a notation on his enlisted evaluation report (EER). He could also discipline him through an Article 15 or a court-martial.

□ In another case, driver X operated a vehicle at a speed higher than the posted speed limit. He hit vehicle driven by Y in front of him and damaged the front end of his own vehicle. The driver of a third vehicle (Z) was called to tow driver X's

vehicle. Driver Z improperly hooked up the towing equipment and caused damage to the rear bumper of the vehicle. In this case, X was held liable for the damage to the front end of the vehicle. He was not held liable for the damage to the rear bumper because his negligence (speeding) was not the proximate cause of the damage to the rear. Driver Z's acts amounted to an "intervening cause." An intervening cause is a new and independent force that breaks the causal connection between the original wrongdoing and the injury. It becomes the direct and immediate cause itself. Driver Z's act of negligently hooking up broke into the ordinary course of events. Driver Z's negligence was sufficient itself to cause damage to the rear. The original speeding had nothing directly to do with that damage. As a general rule, if the result of the negligence was not one which might have been reasonably foreseen, then the negligence was not the proximate cause of the result. In the above example, it was reasonably foreseeable that speeding could cause an accident. It was not reasonably foreseeable that a tow truck would further damage the vehicle if an accident did occur. In this case, you should hold driver X liable for the damage to the front of the vehicle and driver Z liable for the damage to the rear bumper. Each of the drivers could reasonably have foreseen the possible damage to the vehicle as the result of his action.

### 31. When Do You Find A Person Pecuniarily Liable?

Pecuniary liability is the indebtedness of a person or corporation to the US Government for property that was lost, damaged, or destroyed as a result of the fault or negligence of the person or corporation. The liability results when the person or corporation's negligence or willful misconduct (including wrongful appropriation) is the proximate cause of the loss or destruction of Government property.

■ You can find a person pecuniarily liable if he has personal or nonpersonal responsibility for any loss he caused by his willful misconduct or negligence.

■ You can charge someone for a loss of property even though the property was not in his personal possession or under his supervisory control.

### 32. What Basic Methods Do You Use When You Compute A Pecuniary Charge?

The basic premise on which you should compute the pecuniary charges is that the charge should represent the actual loss to the Government. Actual loss to the Government is the difference between the value of the property immediately before its loss, damage, or destruction and its value immediately after. AR 735-11 establishes four means of arriving at the actual loss to the Government and the amount to be charged. *They must be considered in sequence.* If the first method cannot be used, then the second must be used; if not the second, then the third; and so on.

■ If the item is repairable, then you should base the charge on the actual cost of repairs.

■ If the item cannot be repaired because it is too badly damaged, have a technical inspector determine the value before the damage and the fair market value of the item after the damage. Include salvage credit when it is appropriate.

■ If the item is not repairable and the technical inspection is impossible (when an item is lost or completely destroyed as in a fire), apply the appropriate depreciation formula to determine property value on the basis of normal life expectancy as described in Army publications.

■ Deduct standard rebuild cost from the cost price of the item.

### 33. How Do You Compute The Actual Cost Of Repairs?

If an item can be repaired, you base the charges on the cost of repairs minus certain allowances. Remember, the regulations require that you use the actual cost of repairs. Have the technical people make an itemized calculation of anticipated costs if they can't give you the actual costs in time for the Report of Survey. In no case can you delay the RS because you don't have the actual cost of repairs but process the RS on the basis of an estimated cost of repairs. Show on the RS or on an exhibit the reason that you used this method of computing the charge, as well as the basis on which the technical person figured the cost. The approving authority can take final action in block 37 on this basis. It takes the action with the clear understanding of all parties that the actual charge can be recomputed when the actual cost is received.

■ When you compute the actual cost of repairs, you charge for the following expenses.

☐ **Direct materials.** If a fender was damaged, you charge for the cost of the new fender.

☐ **Direct labor.** Charge for the actual rate paid for civilian labor. If soldier or prisoner-of-war labor is used, charge for that cost by using the installation procedures set up according to AR 37-108.

☐ **Overhead costs.** Use the amount as computed by using authorized local cost accounting systems at a Government repair activity. Don't include statistical costs unless the installation is financed by the Army Industrial Fund. (Then follow directions in AR 37-110.)

☐ **Transportation costs.** Charge for the cost of shipping an item to the repair installation and returning it.

■ Remember that you should allow for things that affect the actual loss to the Government.

☐ **Allowance for increase in value.** If extensive repairs enhance the value so that the item is worth more than it was before the repair, you must make an allowance for the increase in value.

☐ **Credit for scrap value.** You can give credit for the scrap value of parts that can't be reused. *Do not allow the full list price* of the part. Allow salvage credit for the usable or salable value of metal as waste or scrap. (Under DOD 4160.21-M and AR 725-50 such property must be mutilated and turned in to the property disposal officer.)

### 34. When And How Do You Use A Technical Inspection?

When you are computing charges on an item that cannot be repaired, you need to start the computations on the basis of the value just before the item was damaged. Try to have the technical inspection made as soon as you can after you are appointed surveying officer. (In some cases one echelon will classify a vehicle or other item as repairable and the next higher echelon (where the item would be repaired) will determine that the item cannot be economically repaired. At such a late date it is almost impossible to obtain a technical inspection for the Report of Survey.)

#### ■ Definition of Technical Inspection.

What is a technical inspection? The term is somewhat deceptive. Under AR 735-11, it is *more than a limited inspection* to determine the extent of damage and to establish whether the item is repairable. It also involves an *appraisal* to determine the value of the item just before it was damaged or destroyed. It may cover an explanation of why fair market value does not exist in a specific case.

■ **Need for Technical Expert.** For a technical inspector (sometimes called a classification officer), you need a person with a thorough knowledge of the item and its uses, mechanisms, and functions and with broad experience in dealing with the type of item. In most cases, this person will be a *representative of the maintenance support* for the installation or activity. He will have to determine the prices of the same or similar items sold in the commercial markets at or about the time of the loss. With his experience he can usually arrive at the fair market value of the item at the time of the loss.

■ **Decision on Fair Value of Item.** If the fair market value seems to be unfair to the Government or to the person charged, that value should not be used. For instance, if the cost price of a pair of binoculars was \$97, and they are now being sold on the open market for \$175, you could not use the price of \$175. In some cases, a determination of fair market value is impossible. For example, there is no commercial market for missiles whatsoever.

■ **Explanation by Technical Inspector.** If the fair market value is not to be used, the technical inspector must furnish an explanation. For example, he must state that there is no existing market for missiles or that binoculars are being sold in the local market at prices higher than the cost of the acquisition of the item by the Army.

■ **Procedures for Vehicle Cases.** Vehicle cases make up the major portion of all Reports of Survey and provide the biggest problem area in the computation of pecuniary charges. Since the market for commercial vehicles is in many instances inflated, and since there is no market for many tactical-type vehicles, the technical inspector must rely to a far greater extent on his judgment of values. To help him arrive at a fair determination, the Army developed special procedures for use in vehicle cases. The technical inspector decides the general value of the vehicle before the damage, taking into consideration the age of the vehicle. He uses the directions in appendix H, AR 735-11. When a technical form such as DA Form 461-5 (Vehicle Classification Inspection) is provided, use it for your work and attach it as an exhibit.

### 35. When And How Do You Use Depreciation For Computing Charges For An Item?

Sometimes property is not repairable, and technical inspection is impossible because the item is lost or completely destroyed as in a fire. In such cases, apply an appropriate depreciation formula to get the value on the basis of normal life expectancy.

For example, you must compute the value of an item that was lost or destroyed. Technical inspection is impossible since the item is not available. You wish to be fair to the person involved so that you charge him only on the basis of the actual value at the time of loss. Make an allowance for depreciation depending on the age and type of item.

You should apply the depreciation to the acquisition cost of the item and do so *only* when the item was *less than new* at the time of loss. Consider an item new if it was rebuilt recently. You may use table 11-2 in AR 27-20, Claims, as a guide to help you figure out the amount. The table is a guide to be used when claims are made against the US Government. However, it can be very useful to you when you are figuring the charges. Depreciation allowances found in AR 735-11 are shown in table 3. If any conflict arises as you use the two tables, remember that the limits in AR 735-11 take precedence for your work.

**Table 3. ALLOWANCES FOR DEPRECIATION**

Type of Item	Allowance	Remarks
Items of Perishable Material	25%	Items of leather, canvas, plastic, or rubber are included.
Nonpowered Handtools	10%	This is a standard deduction.
Electronic Equipment and Office Furniture		
Years of service known	5% per year up to 50%	
Years of service not known	Standard 25%	
Organizational Clothing and Individual Equipment	10%	This excludes personal clothing.
General Purpose Vehicles	App H, AR 735-11	
Family Quarters Furniture	AR 210-6, table 1-1	Table gives life expectancy in tropical and nontropical climates.
Other Property--Service Years Known	5% per year up to 75%	
Other Property--Service Years Not Known	25%	

## **TIPS ON RECOMMENDATIONS**

- State the full name, rank, and social security number of the person or persons against whom you recommend a charge and the amount of the charge.
- Indicate how the unserviceable property should be disposed of.
- Be sure your recommendations are just and follow logically from the facts in the evidence and findings.
- If you find two or more persons liable, and if their liability is joint and several, compute the charges in proportion to the basic pay of the individuals. (See question 40.)
- You may hold a person liable and yet charge him "zero" in some cases. Several reports may be required for property lost in one incident, like a fire. The person can be charged only 1 month's pay per incident, and thus you can charge that amount on one RS and zero on the others.
- If you recommend a charge against a civilian, he has to give his written consent to have it taken out of his *current* pay. If he refuses, the Government has to wait to collect from his final pay or the Civil Service Retirement Fund under AR 37-105.

## **TIPS ON FINDINGS**

- Don't include mere unsubstantiated opinions.
- Don't use stereotyped phrases like "lost or damaged in manner stated."
- State in your own words just how the loss occurred on the basis of evidence you found in your investigation.
- Show that the evidence supports your findings by referring to the exhibits as you go along.
- Make your findings complete enough so that reviewers can see the responsibility in the case without sending the report back to you for more information.
- If you recommend pecuniary charges, show how you computed them in block 27.
- State in your findings how any item was disposed of, and attach a copy of the turn-in document as an exhibit.

AR 672-5-1, Military Awards, will be replaced by AR 600-8-22, the Army Awards System, to be published in FY 91 or early FY 92. The new regulation will contain simplified recommendation procedures for meritorious achievement or service awards of the Meritorious Service Medal and below. These procedures, which require the use of a new form, DA Form 638-1, are currently published as AR 672-5-1, Interim Change, No. 101



# THE RECOMMENDATION FOR AWARD

1. **SUMMARY.** The U.S. Army awards program provides tangible evidence and public recognition for acts of valor and exceptional service or achievement.

2. **USES.**

a. The awards program creates an incentive toward greater effort and accomplishment. Individual decorations and awards are a most effective means of fostering high morale, incentive, and esprit de corps. Whether in peace or war, we use orders to announce the award of decorations. Anyone—officer, enlisted, or civilian—who has personal knowledge of an act, achievement, or service may recommend the award of a decoration.

b. Use AR 672-5-1 to determine criteria for the award. The awards in ascending order are:

Narrative Should Begin

Certificate of Achievement	Optional
DA Certificate of Achievement	Optional
Army Achievement Medal	For outstanding service as...
Army Commendation Medal	For distinguished service as...
Meritorious Service Medal	For exceptional meritorious service...
Legion of Merit	For exceptional meritorious service...

3. **GUIDELINES.** Recommendations for awards are in two parts.

a. Proposed Citation (typed on DA Form 638).

(1) The citation is a condensed account of the soldier's superior performance. It should be no more than 150 words.

(2) It tells:

(a) The period of time the award covers.

(b) The job(s) the soldier performed during this period.

(c) The major accomplishments during this period.

(d) The positive results these accomplishments had.

(3) It ultimately appears on the award certificate given to the soldier.

b. Narrative Description of Service (typed on an attached sheet of plain paper).

(1) The narrative or justification helps to convince the Awards Board that the soldier deserves the award. The key is specificity.

(a) It shouldn't describe typical duties but service "above and beyond the call of duty." It should answer the question: Exactly why should the nominee receive the recommended award?

(b) It explains how the soldier accomplished the major achievements.

(c) It describes specifically what resulted from the soldier's achievements.

(2) The narrative should be one long paragraph and a minimum of 250 words, typed in all capital letters. Do not number sentences.

(3) In order to write the narrative, you will need:

(a) Information about a service member's meritorious achievement or service or act of heroism.

(b) DA Form 638, Recommendation for Award.

(c) The soldier's personal data.

(d) AR 672-5-1.

#### 4. REFERENCES.

a. AR 672-5-1.

b. USAARMC Suppl 1 to AR 672-5-1.

RECOMMENDATION FOR AWARD		<input type="checkbox"/> HEROISM <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MERITORIOUS ACHIEVEMENT OR SERVICE	
For use of this form, see AR 672-5-1: the proponent agency is MILPERCEN.			
<b>TO: (Include ZIP code)</b> Commander 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment APO New York 09146		<b>FROM: (Include ZIP code)</b> Commander 1st Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment APO New York 09146	
<b>PART I - PERSONAL DATA</b>			
1. LAST NAME-FIRST NAME-MIDDLE NAME DOE, Richard David		2. SSN 983-04-8239	3. GRADE E6
4. BRANCH/PMOS(EM) 19E30			
5. ORGANIZATION AND STATION C Troop, 1st Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, APO New York 09146			
6. RECOMMENDED AWARD (Include Oak Leaf Clusters) Army Commendation Medal		7. POSTHUMOUS AWARD: <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	
8. DESIRED DATE OF PRESENTATION 19 June 1989		a. DATE AND PLACE OF DEATH	
9. WAS INTERIM AWARD MADE? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO		b. NAME, RELATIONSHIP AND ADDRESS OF NOK	
AWARD:			
<b>PART II - RECOMMENDATION FOR AWARD FOR ACHIEVEMENT OR SERVICE</b>			
10. INCLUSIVE DATES FOR WHICH RECOMMENDED 24 Feb 87 - 12 Mar 89		11. INCLUSIVE DATES OF ASSIGNMENT TO UNIT SHOWN IN ITEM 5. STATE REASON FOR END DATE (Retire, PCS, etc.) 24 Feb 87 - 12 Mar 89 (PCS)	
12. ALL PREVIOUS AWARDS TO INDIVIDUAL (Do not include interim award) AAM			
<b>PART III - RECOMMENDATION FOR AWARD FOR HEROISM</b>			
13. INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION ABOUT EYEWITNESSES ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF 8 x 10 1/2" BOND PAPER: a. Full name, b. SSN, c. Grade, d. Unit. STATE REASONS IF EYEWITNESS STATEMENTS ARE NOT ATTACHED.			
14. CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH ACT WAS PERFORMED			
a. LOCATION		b. TIME	c. DATE
d. UNIT MORALE, CASUALTIES, AND MISSION DURING TIME AND DATE(S) OF ACT(S)			
<b>PART IV - PROPOSED CITATION</b>			
15. DESCRIBE THE INDIVIDUAL'S PERFORMANCE IN THE SPACE PROVIDED BELOW. DO NOT USE A CONTINUATION SHEET EXCEPT FOR HEROISM AWARDS AND AWARD OF THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL. FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AS TANK COMMANDER, C TROOP, 1ST SQUADRON, 11TH ARMORED CAVALRY, FROM 24 FEBRUARY 1987 TO 12 MARCH 1989. STAFF SERGEANT DOE'S EXEMPLARY INSTRUCTOR SKILLS AND MAINTENANCE STANDARDS HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO 1ST SQUADRON'S MANY ACHIEVEMENTS. HIS INSTRUCTION HAS ALLOWED HIS PLATOON TO CONSISTENTLY SCORE AMONG THE SQUADRON'S HIGHEST IN SQT AND LEVEL I GUNNERY. IN FACT, DURING SERGEANT DOE'S TWO YEARS HERE, C TROOP HAS SCORED HIGHEST IN THE SQUADRON IN SQT. HIS EXCEPTIONAL MAINTENANCE STANDARDS RESULTED IN HIS TANK RECEIVING A COMMENDABLE RATING, ONE OF THREE IN THE SQUADRON, DURING THE 1988 POST AGI. STAFF SERGEANT DOE'S PERFORMANCE OF DUTY REFLECTS DISTINCT CREDIT UPON HIMSELF, THE NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS, AND THE UNITED STATES ARMY.			
<b>PART V - OTHER INSTRUCTIONS AND AUTHENTICATION</b>			
16. LIST ATTACHMENTS (authorized for heroism and DSM awards only). See Chapter 2, AR 672-5-1 for preparation. 1. Narrative 2. PMO Check		17. RELATED POSITION OF PERSON INITIATING RECOMMENDATION TO PERSON BEING RECOMMENDED Platoon Leader	
19. IF APPROVED, FORWARD AWARD TO: S1 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment		18. TYPED NAME, GRADE, BRANCH AND TITLE OF PERSON INITIATING RECOMMENDATION HARRY BENSON, 1LT, Armor, Platoon Leader	
		20. SIGNATURE	21. DATE

NARRATIVE - SAMPLE FOR AN ARCOM

(1) For distinguished service as tank commander, Charlie Troop, 1st Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, from 24 February 1987 to 12 March 1989. (2) During SSG Doe's assignment, his initiative, instructor skills, and maintenance standards have contributed substantially to the successes this unit enjoyed. (3) During maneuver exercises, he consistently demonstrated a high degree of initiative, (4) as when he took charge of the remnants of an isolated portion of the troop and led them back to safety during a covering force operation, harassing the enemy from behind the entire way. (5) He displayed his initiative again when, during a critical counterattack, severe enemy jamming had reduced radio communication to nearly useless. He set up an interim radio relay system between vehicles in each platoon that could still communicate. (6) The result was the troop was able to work through the jamming and carry the counterattack on to a successful conclusion. (7) He also proved to be a very capable instructor. (8) He taught several classes to the other noncommissioned officers in the troop on basic noncommissioned officer skills, common, and MOS-related skills, and he was so well versed in turret and fire control equipment and procedures that he also acted as the troop master gunner until the appointed master gunner returned from the Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course several months later. (9) As a result of his instruction, his platoon scored second highest in the squadron on the 19E SQT in 1987 and highest in the squadron in 1988 and 1989. Also, the troop scored highest in the squadron the two years he was there. In addition, during Level I Gunnery, his platoon scored second highest in the squadron in 1987 and highest in the squadron in 1988 and 1989. (10) His standards of maintenance were always

## FOOTNOTES FOR SAMPLE ARCOM

(1) This opening sentence meets the suggested format for a narrative. Note that all pertinent information is in this first sentence.

(2) This sentence is an example of a bottom line describing Sergeant Doe's major contributions as a Tank Commander in the order they will be discussed and supported with specific facts which follow. Also notice the clarity of "...contributed substantially..." instead of the lengthy, wordy phrase "The successes the unit enjoys are the results of...". Note the "of" in the wordy form.

(3) Here's an example of the use of a duty performance description and a general characteristic or trait, where we consider Staff Sergeant Doe's initiative, and highlight it through the use of a transitional/helping phrase. Note the active voice "...he...demonstrated...initiative..." instead of a passive "...initiative was demonstrated by him on numerous occasions." Note the "by" in the passive construction.

(4) Notice that we supported the preceding comment on Staff Sergeant Doe's high degree of initiative at once. Note the active action words, "took charge, led, and harassing."

(5) Here's a comment on Staff Sergeant Doe's resourcefulness in addition to his initiative. Also, it states another verifiable fact used to support the initial transitional/helping sentence on initiative.

(6) A concrete, direct result of Staff Sergeant Doe's initiative was the success of the counterattack. This helps justify the recommended award in simple, short, direct, and accurate factual statements.

(7) Here's another idea that gelled from a key word "ability," which we expanded on to form a transition from the idea on initiative to this idea of being an outstanding instructor. Notice that the sentence is direct and to the point.

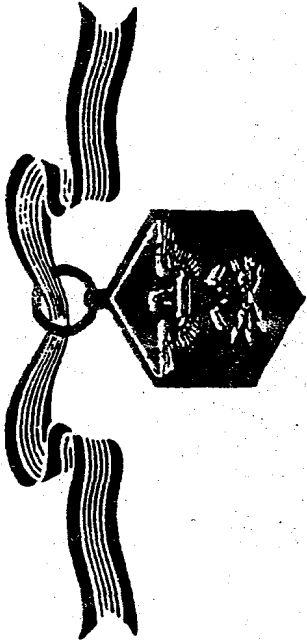
(8) This sentence supports the preceding transitional sentence with a verifiable fact and also comments on Staff Sergeant Doe's expertise in several areas. Notice the active constructions of "...taught...acted as..."

(9) These are probably two of the strongest, most supportive phrases in this narrative. These are hard, verifiable, commendable results of Staff Sergeant Doe's efforts. These sentences lend credence to Staff Sergeant Doe's technical expertise and his ability to convey that expertise to others in a meaningful manner. It also lends credence to the claim we made earlier in the narrative about his teaching ability.

(10) This phrase is a combination of a duty performance description highlighted by characteristics. It is put into solid form with the help of transitional sentences to form a complete supported claim as to Staff Sergeant

exceptionally high. During the 1988 Post AGI, his M60A3 received a no-faults-noted, commendable rating - one of three in the squadron. (11) Staff Sergeant Doe's devotion to duty and standards of excellence are in keeping with the finest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, the Noncommissioned Officer Corps, and the United States Army.





# DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY HAS AWARDED

## THE ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL

TO STAFF SERGEANT RICHARD DAVID DOE, UNITED STATES ARMY

FOR distinguished service as Tank Commander, C Troop, 1st Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry, from 24 February 1987 to 12 March 1989. Staff Sergeant Doe's exemplary instructor skills and maintenance standards have contributed to 1st Squadron's many achievements. His instruction has allowed his platoon to consistently score among the squadron's highest in SQT and Level I Gunnery. In fact, During Sergeant Doe's two years here, C Troop has scored highest in the squadron in SQT. His exceptional maintenance standards resulted in his tank receiving a commendable rating, one of three in the squadron, during the 1986 Post AGI. Staff Sergeant Doe's performance of duty reflects distinct credit upon himself, the noncommissioned officer corps, and the United States Army.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON  
THIS 19th DAY OF June 1989



*Frank L. Frederickson*

FRANK L. FREDERICKSON  
Colonel, Armor  
Commanding, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment

*James D. Marshall, Jr.*  
SECRETARY OF THE ARMY

FOR INSTRUCTIONAL PURPOSES ONLY



# **SECTION III**

## **RULES AND TIPS**

# RULES FOR MILITARY CORRESPONDENCE

1. Follow these military style rules (per DA Pam 310-20: Administrative Publications: Action Officers Guide):

## NUMBERS.

o Express whole numbers of 10 or more in figures: "15 missiles," "10 guns," and "40 men."

o Spell out numbers at the beginning of a sentence: "Fifteen missiles are in storage." "Ten guns are at the repair shop."

o Express numbers as figures when they are a unit of measurement, time, or money: "4 inches," "3 hours," and "\$6.00."

o Spell out numbers under 10 (except those that are a unit of measurement, time, or money). For example, write "three soldiers" not "3 soldiers."

Example: We have five new NCOs in the battery.

o Except in legal documents, don't write numbers in the duplicate form: "four (4) dollars" or "four dollars (\$4)."

o Use figures for a group of two or more related numerical expressions: "She typed 8 of the 10 pages. We have 3 of the 8 men present."

NUMBERS IN COLUMNS. In lists and charts, write numbers right-justified. Always list the elements of the list in the same order.

### RIGHT

1st Bde 167  
2d Bde 2  
3d Bde 4

### WRONG

2d Bde 32  
1st Bde 167  
3d Bde 9

MILITARY TIME. Use a group of four digits, and don't include the word "hours:" "0800" is correct, not "0800 hours" or "0800 hours in the morning."

MILITARY DATES. Express the date as day, month, year in all military correspondence except letters: 15 January 1987. If you abbreviate the month, also abbreviate the year: 15 Jan 87. (The abbreviation isn't all capitals.)

DESIGNATION OF MILITARY UNITS. Use words in referring to armies, army areas, and air forces: Fifth U.S. Army. Use Roman numerals for corps: V Corps. Use ordinal numbers for divisions, brigades, regiments, battalions, companies, and detachments: 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery, 43d Ordnance Company.

## CORRECT WORDING.

- o Use "soldier" or "officer" not "service member."
- o Use rank not pay grade. For example, use "first lieutenants" not "02s." Also, use "LTC-level command" or "battalion-level command" rather than "05 command."

CAPITALIZATION. Capitalize rank only when it's necessary and appropriate. For example, write "promotion to captain" and "Captain Brown."

### 2. Use the preferred spelling.

- o Write "judgment" not "judgement."
- o Write "counseled" not "counselled."
- o Write "Provost Marshal" not "Provost Marshall."
- o Write "Fire Marshal" not "Fire Marshall."

### 3. Don't misspell these commonly misspelled words.

absence	analyze	analysis	artillery	battalion
canceled	cancellation	colonel	commitment	counseling
develop	ensure	exercise	initiative	its/it's
judgment	lieutenant	lump-sum	maintenance	maneuver
moral/morale	muster	occasion	occurred	payment
personal	personnel	professional	proficiency	receive
recommend	rescind	separate	sergeant	soldier
supersede	to/two/too	there/their/they're	defense	cavalry

### 4. Form the plural of words correctly.

- o When a noun is hyphenated with an adverb or preposition, form the plural on the noun: "The passers-by were impressed by the dinings-in they saw."

- o When a rank consists of an adjective and noun, make the noun plural: "There were many sergeants first class (or SFCs) present to hear the presentations by the sergeants major (or SGMs)."

- o Indicate the plurals of capital letters and abbreviations by adding the "s" alone: three Rs, four Ss, two FDOs, 10 SFCs, 12 OERs.

- o Add "s" alone for the plural of numbers expressed in figures: the 1980s, the W-2s, temperatures in the low 20s.

### 5. Use the right signature block (per AR 25-50, Preparing and Managing Correspondence):

- o In letters, write using upper and lower case letters for the name. Write out the rank. For NCOs, then put USA. For officers, U.S. Army.

Jerrard N. Jeraldson  
Staff Sergeant, USA

Robert B. Robertson  
First Lieutenant, U.S. Army

o In memorandums and other forms, use upper case letters for the name. To preserve block style format, use short title abbreviations and any mixture of full or abbreviated rank and branch.

JERRARD N. JERALDSON  
SSG, USA  
Platoon Sergeant

ROBERT B. ROBERTSON  
First Lieutenant, AR  
Executive Officer

JON SMITH  
2LT, AR  
XO

o When writing as an individual, add your social security number and unit:

JERRARD N. JERALDSON  
444-22-9999  
SSG, USA  
HHB, 2/27 Field Arty

ROBERT B. ROBERTSON  
555-66-7777  
2LT, AR  
C Co, 1/37 Armor

# ABBREVIATIONS, ACRONYMS, AND BREVITY CODES

## 1. Acronyms.

a. Write out acronyms the first time you use them. For example, write "Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course (ANCOC)" the first time you use "ANCOC." (Also, notice that "noncommissioned" is one word without a hyphen.)

b. Don't use apostrophes when you write plural acronyms. For example, it's "NCOs" and "EERs" not "NCO's" and "EER's."

## 2. Abbreviations and Shortened Forms of Words.

a. Don't use periods with military abbreviations. It's "Ft Bragg" not "Ft. Bragg" and "CPT Jones" not "CPT. Jones."

b. Don't use shortened forms of words in the body of correspondence. For example, don't use "thru," "ASAP," or "btry" in narrative; spell out "through," "as soon as possible," and "battery."

c. Write the abbreviation for "headquarters" as "HQ"; note there is no "s."

d. Abbreviate the words "second" and "third" as "2d" and "3d" (without the "n" and "r"): 2d Battalion; 3d Armored Division.

e. Write out the word "percent" unless you're using it in a chart.

f. Don't put a hyphen between the letter and number of a staff position title. For example, it's "S1" and "G4" not "S-1" and "G-4."

## 3. Commonly Used Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Brevity Codes.

### RANKS

General	GEN	Sergeant Major of the Army	SMA
Lieutenant General	LTG	Command Sergeant Major	CSM
Major General	MG	Sergeant Major	SGM
Brigadier General	BG	Master Sergeant	MSG
Colonel	COL	First Sergeant	1SG
Lieutenant Colonel	LTC	Sergeant First Class	SFC
Major	MAJ	Staff Sergeant	SSG
Captain	CPT	Sergeant	SGT
First Lieutenant	1LT	Corporal	CPL

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Major	MAJ	Staff Sergeant	SSG
Captain	CPT	Sergeant	SGT
First Lieutenant	1LT	Corporal	CPL

Second Lieutenant	2LT	Specialist	SPC
Chief Warrant Officer	CWO	Private First Class	PFC
(Also CW2, CW3, CW4)		Private E2	PV2
Warrant Officer	WO1	Private E1	PV1
General Schedule	GS	General Schedule-Merit Pay	GM
Wage Grade Rates	WG	Private	PVT

#### UNITS

team	tm	battalion	bn
squad	sqd	squadron	sqdn
section	sec	brigade	bde
platoon	plt	regiment	reg
company	co	group	gp
battery	btry	division	div
troop	trp	corps	(none)
Armor	AR	Infantry	IN
armored	armd	infantry	inf
Field Artillery	FA	artillery	arty
mechanized	mech	airborne	abn
Engineer	EN	engineers	engr
Headquarters Battery	HHB	Service Battery	Svc Btry
A Battery	A Btry	Division Artillery	Div Arty
3d Armored Division	3d Armd Div	3d Infantry Division	3d Inf Div

Advanced Individual Training	AIT
Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Educational System	ANCOES
Advanced Noncommissioned Officers Course	ANCOC
Annual General Inspection	AGI
Army Physical Fitness Test	APFT
Army Post Office	APO
Army Training and Evaluation Program	ARTEP
Career Management Field	CMF
Close of Business	COB
Commander	Cdr
Executive Officer	XO
Field Manual	FM
Field Training Exercise	FTX
Fire Direction Officer	FDO
Fire Support Officer	FSO
Military Occupational Specialty	MOS
National Guard	NG
Not Earlier Than	NET
Not Later Than	NLT
Permanent Change of Station	PCS
Privately Owned Vehicle	POV
Skill Qualification Test	SQT
Standing Operating Procedure	SOP
Staff Judge Advocate	SJA
Technical Manual	TM



United States Army Reserve

USAR

United States

U.S.

United States Army

USA or U.S. Army

\*\*\*\*\*

...an order that can be misunderstood will be misunderstood.

-Von Moltke

\*\*\*\*\*

## TIPS FOR WRITERS

### Use Personal Pronouns

The new Army style requires using pronouns like I, we, and you. In the past, writers avoided them, perhaps because they sounded too subjective and personal. Avoiding personal pronouns creates an institutional tone. Such a tone can block or slow down communication. A direct and natural style demands using personal pronouns. They make the sentences easy to read and understand.

### Rewrite Expletives

An expletive is a word that takes the place of the subject. The two common expletives are there and it (when it doesn't replace a noun).

#### IT AS A PRONOUN

The report is very thorough and convincing.  
It will open people's eyes.

#### IT AS AN EXPLETIVE

It is important to understand the concept.

The verb and its tense don't make any difference.

As expletives, there and it are never subjects. They create an abnormal word order by forcing the subject to appear after the verb:

There is a good reason for my decision.

The subject is reason. Rearranged, the sentence makes that clear, bringing the key word to the beginning:

A good reason for my decision exists.

But rearranging the sentence reveals another problem with most expletives: lack of meaning. Although they seem significant at first glance, they do little more than affirm existence. Like the example, they can actually disguise the lack of any important idea.

Too often, however, expletives merely add empty words. To avoid them, begin with the real subject:

I have a good reason for my decision.

So revised, the sentence is direct. But it doesn't give any specifics. The best version names both the decision and the reason:

I have decided to accept the job at Fort Bliss because the dry climate in El Paso will be good for my bronchitis.

### Avoid Smothered Verbs

Smothered verb phrases have short, precise, action verbs buried in them. They often start with these verbs--"make, give, provide, have,"--and end with nouns ending in "-ion, -ance, -ment, or -ity."

SMOTHERED:	BETTER:
make a decision.....	decide
give a call to.....	call
provide support to.....	support

### Avoid Jargon, Cliches, and Doubletalk

Jargon, cliches, and doubletalk often confuse more than clarify. Sometimes they reflect the writer's attempt to appear knowledgeable or impressive. Sometimes they are meant to intimidate the reader, making him seem ignorant or an outsider to privy information.

WEAK:	BETTER:
downsized.....	smaller
service technician.....	repairman
mission accomplishment.....	success

### Avoid Legalisms

Legalisms are overblown, pompous, outdated expressions that often confuse more than clarify.

WEAK:	BETTER:
notwithstanding.....	in spite of
heretofore.....	until now
the aforementioned.....	the, that, those

### Avoid Doublings

Doublings are repetitions that waste the reader's time. Often they don't add new information.

DOUBLINGS:	BETTER:
His duties and responsibilities.....	His duties
Please review and comment.....	Please comment
The importance and significance of.....	The significance of

## Avoid Sentence Stretchers

Sentence stretchers ("It is, There is, There are, that, which, all, will, has,") add unnecessary bulk. They blur the main idea.

### UNNEEDED:

It is required that you attend.....You must attend

There are many solutions to the problem.....The problem has many solutions.

My plan is the only one we like.....My plan is the only one we like.

### BETTER:

## Write Solid Sentences

The most natural and common pattern for sentences is subject-verb-object:

Your fact sheet must explain the reasons for accepting any new modifications to the contract.

The subject appears at or near the beginning, the verb follows immediately. This pattern gives readers the grammatical foundation for the sentence, the platform on which the more complicated ideas and specific details can stand.

## Control the Nouns

Turning action words like refer and present into nouns reference and presentation is a useful process. Often, however, the process can overburden sentences with nouns. Such sentences are awkward and heavy:

The manner of presentation throughout the text has been designed to convey the elements of aerodynamic theory, practical experience, and application.

Using presents as the verb lightens the sentence:

The text presents the elements of aerodynamic theory, practical experience, and application.

Expressing the idea of presentation as a verb makes the sentence shorter and certainly less cumbersome. Shorter words lead to a shorter sentence. In this case, as usual, shorter is better.

## Abstract Nouns

Abstractions name qualities or ideas like value and duty. While readers can see people acting dutifully, duty itself doesn't have physical existence. It's a concept. For one person, duty may be a chore; for another, an inspiration. In fact, the more abstract a word is, the wider the diversity and the greater the chances readers will misinterpret. Improve the odds of being understood by being specific.

## Noun Strings

A noun phrase consists of a noun and its modifiers. Appearing before or after the noun, the modifiers clarify, limit, and describe it. Phrases made up of four or more nouns are noun strings.

Consider a typical one: "communications center operations personnel training." Does it mean training for personnel involved with communications center operations or training for operations personnel in the communications center? Consider an extreme one: "HQ service school Army Training Center (ATC) evaluation program schedule (CY86)." Such strings are always confusing. Often they defy translation.

Rewrite noun strings using normal phrases and possessives. For example, "simulation directorate reorganization initiative" should be "the reorganization initiative for the simulation directorate" or "the simulated reorganization initiative for the directorate." One of these describes the facts accurately. Write accurately even though doing so takes an extra word or two.

## Take an Appropriate Tone

Tone of voice reveals the speaker's attitude toward the subject, the audience, and the occasion. It can even reveal the speaker's self-image and preparation.

At some occasions like award ceremonies, formal words are preferable. For example, request is more formal than ask, acquire more formal than get.

Sentences that invert the normal subject-verb sequence often sound excessively formal:

Principal among the persons to whom we owe thanks for improving armywide readiness is General Elliott.

But semiformal tone is the best for nearly all Army writing: correspondence, pamphlets, manuals, training publications. It shouldn't sound relaxed or be nonchalant to the point of using slang. It shouldn't sound oratorical and stiff, either. It should use careful and precise wording and may use contractions, personal pronouns, and commands.

### INFORMAL

The reps don't want their suggestions sideswiped.

### SEMIFORMAL

The representatives don't want their suggestions rejected.

### FORMAL

The representatives do not wish their suggestions found inapplicable.

Assess the subject and the occasion; then make the tone fit.

## Organize Your Ideas

Clear and consistent logic helps pull ideas together, tightening the coherence and giving order to the separate pieces of information. Choose an organizational pattern from those below. Don't lose sight of it while writing, and don't let your readers lose sight of it.

### Chronology, Process

Perhaps the simplest of all organizations, chronology organizes events into a sequence of time segments that are often regularly spaced. Annals are histories presented in yearly segments. Scenarios divide events into roughly similar segments—hours, say, or half hours.

A process is a step-by-step sequence that occurs over a span of time. The steps, rather than time segments, control the organization:

### Cause, Effect

Cause begins with the effect, or result. It then traces the reasons leading up to that result.

Effect begins with a cause and looks at subsequent effects, immediate or future, possible or actual.

Cause and effect are inseparable, of course. An effect becomes the cause for a further effect, and so on. A single effect may have multiple causes; a single cause may have multiple effects. For purposes of organizing, however, consider them as opposite ways of looking at the same material. Avoid shifting your focus from cause to effect and back. Doing so makes the logic unmanageable and confuses the emphasis.

### Comparison, Contrast

Comparison concentrates on similarities among items or events. Contrast stresses the differences. Between any two possibilities you'll probably find both similarities and differences, but for organizational purposes, use one or the other. For instance, a discussion of NATO and Warsaw Pact operational tactics might very well look for points they share, but if the principal purpose is to prepare for maneuver, then similarities might not be relevant.

## Classification, Division

Classification places items within larger categories or creates categories out of raw material. Division, or what some call analysis, is the opposite thought pattern. It consists of beginning with a category and breaking it into its components. Classifications and division are, in fact, opposite ways of looking at the same material. A classification pattern, for example, would begin with each of the separate paragraphs for an operations order. A division pattern would begin with the whole order and then deal with its separate paragraphs.

## Induction, Deduction

The inductive pattern first presents specific instances, discussing each in turn. It then draws the general idea from all the specifics. Deduction presents the general idea first. It then applies the idea to specific instances.

These two patterns often work together. Inductive thinking formulates the general idea, and deductive thinking applies it. Sometimes they overlap. While you're developing the broad concept, look ahead to see how it might apply in particular cases.

## Others

Other organizational patterns include working from most to least important--or vice versa--and working from the largest to the smallest--or vice versa. They have much in common with induction and deduction.

## Mindmap Your Topic Before Writing

Use the Mindmapping Technique to brainstorm your topic, organize your thoughts, and create a rough outline.

The worst way to start writing is to just start writing. It's better to think through your topic, collect and organize your thoughts, and then write an outline of your main points. Use this Mindmapping Technique to get off to such a start:

1. Along the top of a blank sheet of paper, state why you're writing. That is, clearly identify your purpose.
2. Below that, state your intended audience. Be specific.
3. Then write out who will sign the document you're preparing. Are you writing for yourself or someone else?
4. In the middle of the paper, write your specific topic. Restrict it as necessary to a manageable scope. Then draw a circle around it.

5. In the next three to five minutes, write down all your ideas about the topic. Use abbreviations or shorthand to jot down everything you can, as fast as you can, anywhere on the paper.

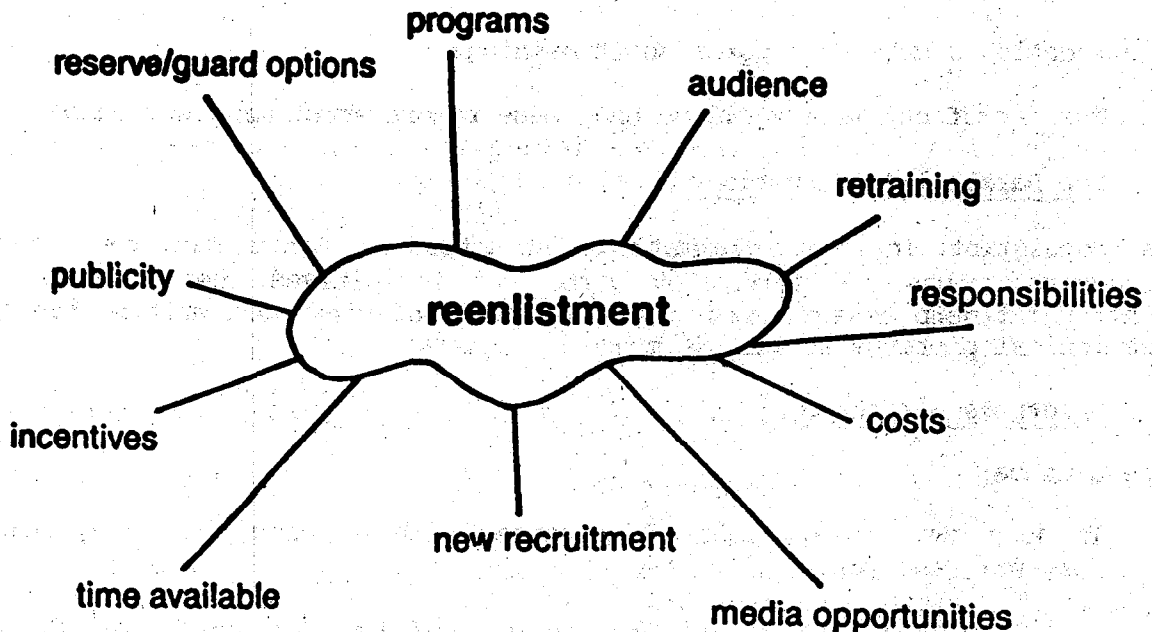
6. Draw lines connecting all related ideas. That is, group your ideas by deciding which things go together naturally.

7. Give each group of related ideas a heading or name.

8. Cross out unneeded ideas or groups of ideas.

9. Figure out your "bottom line" — the main idea you want to express. Write it at the top of your page.

You have just completed the mindmapping process and your "first draft." Now create a formal outline to refine your thoughts, and write your paper from the outline.





## Avoid Fallacies

Fallacies are illogical statements caused by errors in thinking. Those listed below are three of the many possible.

### Hasty Generalization

A generalization drawn from a single instance or an insufficient number of instances is logically indefensible. You can't be sure a single instance is typical. Jumping to broad conclusions is a similar fallacy.

### Begging the Question

Begging the question occurs when a statement or argument repeats its assumption. The logic goes in a circle, ending up where it started:

Your performance appraisal has a high priority because it's near the top of the list of actions we have to take.

Looking like an important assertion at first glance, it merely repeats itself: the priority is high because the priority is high.

### Equivocation

Equivocation occurs when words shift meaning:

The end of our meeting is to end these rumors about manpower cuts.

### Use Parallel Constructions

Be consistent in your grammatical structure. Don't mix sentences and fragments, nouns and verbs, or verbs and infinitives when writing lists. Don't shift verb tenses, mood, tone, or point of view when writing sentences. Use logical patterns to keep your reader on track.

### Punctuate Correctly

Use a Comma:

To join two closely related sentences with a conjunction--and, but, or, for, nor, so, yet.

SGT Jones is ready for duty, and he has read the CQ book.  
(independent clauses)

To set off an introductory dependent clause from an independent clause.

After he reads the CQ book, the sergeant can start his duty.  
(Dependent clause, independent clause)

To set off a long introductory phrase form an independent clause.

During a check of the billets, the first sergeant saw problems.  
(Long introductory phrase, independent clause)

Use a Semicolon:

To join two closely related sentences without a conjunction.

The sergeant is ready for duty; he has read the CQ book.  
(Independent clauses)

With adverbial conjunctives—however, therefore, then, also, moreover, consequently.

SGT Jones is ready for duty; however, he must first was 1SG Po.

Use a Colon:

After a noun to indicate that a list follows.

He found many problems: dirty latrines, floors, and windows.  
(Independent clause: list)

When a list follows a complete thought.

To be a good leader, an officer or NCO must be the following:  
A competent teacher.  
An effective counselor.  
An efficient manager.

Use the Dash, Apostrophe, and Hyphen:

Use a dash before a dramatic, explanatory remark.

He said the battery needed a party—a GI party. (Independent clause—exploratory remark)

Use a dash when you need a list to form a complete thought.

To be a good leader, an officer or NCO must be—  
A competent teacher.  
An effective counselor.  
An efficient manager.

Use an apostrophe with possessive nouns.

The first sergeant's comments were brief and drew the battery's sergeants' immediate attention to the problem.

Don't use an apostrophe to form the plural of an acronym.

The various NCOs took the SQTs for their MOSSs.

Use hyphens for compound nouns, numbers, and modifiers.

right-of-way	well-known NCO
Know-it-all	twenty-five

### Word Use and Misuse

Note the following nonstandard constructions: "Could of," "Might of," "Should of," "Would of." They result from the fact that in rapid or informal speech the pronunciation of have is similar to of.

Note the proper use of "its" and "it's." "Its" is a possessive pronoun; "it's" is a contraction of "it is," and the apostrophe indicates the omission of a letter.

Don't confuse the homonyms "principal" and "principle." "Principal" occurs both as an adjective meaning "chief" or "most important" and as a noun meaning "head person" or "sum of money drawing interest." "Principle" occurs only as a noun meaning "fundamental truth or doctrine."

Note the difference between the homonyms "stationary" and "stationery." "Stationary" is an adjective meaning "in one place," while "stationery" is a noun referring to writing paper and envelopes.

Note the colloquial use of "a lot" and "lots" in the sense of "a great many" or "a great deal." Standard usage requires "many" or "much." Never join the two words "a lot" into the single expression "alot."

Note the distinction between the spelling of "their" and "there." "Their" is the possessive form of the pronoun "they." "There" is the adverbial form contrasted with "here." "There" is also used as an expletive to begin a sentence.

Don't confuse "then" and "than." "Then" is an adverb referring to times; "than" is a conjunction used with comparisons and contrasts.

Avoid adding the suffix -wise, meaning "concerning," to nouns in order to form such combinations as "timewise," "plotwise," "promotionwise." Some word formations with -wise, meaning "in the manner of," are acceptable (e.g., "clockwise").

The use of take and.... and try and.... is not acceptable in formal English. The sentence, "In a rage he took and smashed the vase," should be stated simply, "In a rage he smashed the vase." The sentence, "He ought to try and kick on the next play," should be stated simply, "He ought to kick on the next

play." If the idea of trying, attempting, or endeavoring to do something is intended, express the intended action as an infinitive: "He ought to try to kick on the next play."

The plural of "self" is "selves." Such nonstandard usages as "They hurt themselves," and "They hate themselves" are unacceptable.

Note the difference between "moral" and "morale." We talk about the "moral" of a story, but about the "morale" of the troops.

"On account of" is not an acceptable substitute for "because."

Note the difference between "advice" and "advise." The first form is a noun, the second a verb. "He advised me to ignore your advice."

Note the correct use of "loose" and "lose." "Loose" is most common as an adjective (a loose button). Always use lose as a verb (You are going to lose your money).

Don't confuse the words "raise" and "rise." "Rise" is an intransitive verb (rise, rose, risen) used most often with the meaning "to start or get up" (I rose this morning at dawn). "Raise" is a transitive verb (raise, raised, raised) meaning "lift" or "elevate" (Raise your hand if you have a question).

Avoid using "is when" and "is where" in definitions. Instead of "when" or "where" use a noun phrase or clause.

Notice the final "d" in "used to." We do not pronounce it in formal speech because it is elided (omitted or slurred) before the "t" of "to." But the phrase is written "used to" not "use to."

Don't confuse "may be" and "maybe." The former is a compound verb; the latter is a synonym for perhaps.

"Irregardless," a double negative, is unacceptable. The word to use is regardless.

Note the proper use of "fewer" and "less." "Fewer" is the preferred term in most examples involving reference to numbers or units considered individually and therefore capable of being counted. "Less" refers to collective quantity or to something abstract; fewer people, less noise. Sentences involving periods of time, sums of money, or measures of distance, weight, or the like usually require "less," since the sense of is collective.

Note the common confusion between "accept" and "except." To "accept" means "to receive as a," "to agree to as a plan," etc. "Accept" is always a verb and always has in it the idea of receiving or agreeing to. "Except," as a verb, preposition, or conjunction, always conveys the idea of excluding or omitting.

Note the proper use of the adverb "too." Avoid using too as a conjunctive adverb: "Too, it was unjust." It is also incorrect as an intensive: "They did not do too well." Use "very" or nothing.

The correct term is preventive medicine, not preventative medicine.

A person is ill of a disease, not with it. A person dies of an illness, not from it.

People usually die unexpectedly, not suddenly; all deaths are sudden.

Proceed forward is redundant. Proceed says it all.

The term last and latest are not synonymous. For example, the latest edition is the most recent one, and the last edition is the final one.

If you are impartial you are generally considered disinterested. If you could not care less, you might be considered uninterested.

It is between you and me, not between you and I.

The past participle of prove is proved, not proven.

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Army leaders must be able to read, write and speak effectively. If they cannot, and overwhelming experience tells us too many cannot, they will not function effectively on the battlefield. At the very foundation of warfighting is the ability to communicate the commander's intent. This is the fundamental reason to have an Army writing program--it must train leaders to be effective communicators.

--GEN Carl E. Vuono  
17 July 1986

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